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ABSTRACT

Schools have become separated from society and social issues through the practice of "transition education." More specifically, by stressing the preparation of students for society, schools accept the present structure of society as a given and therefore neglect their responsibility to educate. Since schools play an educational role in society, the neglect of this role results in the separation of schools from society. Two attitudes toward curriculum that involve transition education are the vocational/neo-classical orientation and the liberal/progressive orientation. The vocational/neo-classical orientation regards education as a preparation for work and mirrors the current principles of society. The liberal/progressive orientation regards education as a preparation for life, emphasizes individuality, and asserts that society can be improved through the preparation of students for participation in its reconstruction. An alternative to these orientations and their subsequent separateness is the socially-critical orientation. This orientation maintains that education must address society and social issues immediately, emphasizes social and critically speculative processes, and maintains that only collective action can execute social change. Strategies for converting schools to a socially critical orientation include involving the community, curriculum reflection and debate, inservice activities, school reviews, and monitoring progress. The first of two appendixes offers nine starting points or concepts for initiating the socially critical school, with annotated lists of readings grouped under each concept. The second appendix contains hypothetical interviews with proponents of the three orientations. (RG)

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Orientations to curriculum and transition:

TOWARDS THE SOCIALLY-CRITICAL SCHOOL

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Orientations to curriculum and transition:
Towards the socially-critical school

by
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on behalf of
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Foreword

This report was prepared within the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education initially to assist an internal working party to probe the relationships between curriculum and transition. It is now being released for wider distribution as a contribution, and a stimulus, to the on-going debate in schools about the curriculum of secondary schools and the transition from school to the adult world. It is a document which could be particularly useful for school in-service education programs, and is released as the Institute seeks to provide material helpful in a practical way to classroom teachers. It should be read in this light rather than implying a particular standpoint being adopted by the Institute.

Two of the authors, Peter Cole and Dahle Suggett, are staff members of the Institute who know schools well and have been vigorously addressing the issues of the role of schools in the contemporary world and in the context of the difficulties students face when leaving school. The other author, Associate Professor Stephen Kemmis from Deakin University, has given the Institute considerable assistance and also is working actively in this particular field of educational enquiry.

The authors begin from the premise that the central role of schools is educational, and they argue that in the present social and economic climate schools are being moved, under the guise of 'transition problems', to deflect their attention from this educational role to one of socialisation where the existing structure of society is simply taken for granted. Throughout, the fundamental concern in the report is curriculum: curriculum embodied quite concretely in the framework and the processes of the school, in all its practices, explicit and implicit. To have a curriculum, a school must be clear about how it produces the effects it does, what effects it aspires to but does not produce, and what effects it does not acknowledge but does produce. To have a curriculum, a school must understand, and have some theory of, curriculum.

As Chairman of the Council of the Institute, I am pleased to commend this report for discussion and debate in the hope that it will assist teachers, parents and students to formulate and to implement the curriculum which they seek.

KWONG LEE DOW
February 1983

Contents

Foreword page iii

Preface vii

1. Redefining the transition problem 1
Transition education?
Origins of the 'transition problem'
Preservation of the separate school
Beyond the separate school

2. Orientations to curriculum 8
The vocational/neo-classical orientation
The liberal/progressive orientation
The socially-critical orientation
The three orientations to curriculum

3. The key images of the socially-critical school 15
How does the socially-critical school understand itself?
A coherent set of principles
How does a school become socially-critical?

4. Strategies for change 20
School-based in-service education
School reviews
Consultancy

5. A breaking consciousness: towards a socially-critical perspective 25
The educational significance of the socially-critical school

Appendices 27
Appendix 1 Nine starting points for the socially-critical school
1. The negotiated curriculum
2. Non-competitive descriptive assessment
3. Mixed ability grouping
4. Parent participation in schools
5. Youth participation - youth action programs
6. Action research models
7. Non-sexist education
8. School organisation
9. The adaptive school

Appendix 2 Three curriculum orientations: hypothetical interviews and profiles of transition initiatives 39
The vocational/neo-classical orientation
The liberal/progressive orientation
The socially-critical orientation

List of tables

Table 1 Three orientations to curriculum 11

Table 2 Dominant concerns of the three orientations 20

Preface

This report examines 'transition education' through the exploration of different orientations to curriculum. We have labelled these curriculum orientations the vocational/neo-classical orientation, the liberal/progressive orientation and the socially-critical orientation. These orientations are relatively well-known ways of thinking about education. They show how different educational views manifest themselves in curriculum — in the view of knowledge adopted by the school, teacher-student relationships, assessments, the school community, and the like. (In Appendix 2 a presentation of these orientations is cast in the form of hypothetical interviews with advocates of the orientations.) These orientations are presented schematically in section 2 of this report and a fuller articulation of the third orientation, the socially-critical school, is developed in sections 3 and 4. These sections also deal with strategies for transforming contemporary schools so the idea of the socially-critical school can be realised.

However, before developing the socially-critial orientation, we have attempted in section 1 to look more deeply into the 'transition problem'. The rhetoric of 'transition education', in our view, is a way of posing certain fundamental problems faced by schools, but also a way of subtly imposing a 'solution' to those problems — but a solution on the boundary between school and society, not within schools or within society. The image of 'transition' suggests that we deal with the current problems of school and society on the edges of both, as if we did not need to look any deeper.

Our analysis suggests that schools have become separated from society in ways which limit their educational work. We have used the label 'the separate school' to characterise schools that have lost contact with the concerns and issues of the community and society around them, and to point towards our diagnosis of the source of their problems. Of course schools are only one of the institutions of our society that have suffered this kind of separation: the separateness of the separate school is a product of our culture. To restore the school to the community, both must overcome problems. At least in part, this can be achieved if schools hold fast to their educational role.

We have presented the socially-critical school as an alternative image to that of the separate school. We contend that the socially-critical orientation overcomes the problem of separateness endemic to schools adopting the first two orientations. The socially-critical school 'belongs' to its community and society more generally; its distinction from society is in the intrinsically inquiring, critical role that is the mark of an *educational* institution; it does not conceive itself merely as a training institution for society. Some of the characteristics of the socially-critical school are explored in an attempt to show how its principles are coherent at the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school community. These principles are also consistent with a view of society (social philosophy) and a view of the individual (moral philosophy).

For teachers adopting it, the socially-critical orientation invites a critical analysis not only of our society, but also requires a critical examination and reconstruction of the fundamental workings of our schools and their role in society. Some of the elements of this examination are the substance of this report.

The views expressed here are offered partly in recognition of important new work going on in some Victorian schools, and partly to make those views widely known. In this document we hope

to make a contribution to the debate about curriculum and transition already underway in Victorian schools: our aim has been to present some ideas which may challenge present practices and present ideas about schooling in Victoria.

The members of the Working Party are

June Brown
Les Christie
Peter Cole
Gil Freeman
Stephen Kemmis
Betty Levy
John McArthur
Dahle Suggett
Ray Taylor
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The Working Party also wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Colin Moore in carrying out research relating to the themes presented here.

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STEPHEN KEMMIS
Chairperson
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Curriculum and Transition

1
Redefining the transition problem

The question of what schools should do to prepare young people for adult life is and should be at the forefront of educational debate. Post-industrial society has drastically altered the economic status of young people. The guarantee of the past, that more schooling would secure school leavers better jobs, is now patently in question for many students. Many young people have begun to question the usefulness of their schooling experiences in equipping them to lead meaningful fulfilled lives in a complex society. And schools and teachers find themselves in the unenviable position of having to present curriculum proposals capable of responding to a rising tide of demands from groups who see in schooling an answer to the growing list of social and economic ills of our society.

It is our task in this paper to clear some of the conceptual ground for the debate about how the curricula of schools might be transformed to confront the issue of transition. Because the current debates are charged with rhetorical posturings, we must first of all examine the rhetoric of 'transition'. Only when the conceptual ground has been charted can schools set about mapping their programs of development in the area of curricula for transition.

A common strategy used by policy makers for promoting educational change is the formulation of a new rhetoric; a new set of words that in a shorthand way encapsulates the reasons for the desired change, promotes new educational principles and provokes schools into action capable of translating the new principles into new school practices. The new rhetoric can be used to set a framework for schools to reflect on current directions and to indicate new organisational structures and areas of responsibility for teachers. It can also indicate the necessity for new subject areas in the curriculum. It may even be used as a source of principles for new funding arrangements for schools.

By the 1980s the rise and fall of new rhetorics has become as familiar as the rise and fall of adolescent slang — except the game is for adults. 'General studies', 'multi-cultural education', 'human relations', 'career education' and 'work experience' are all examples of well-used, shorthand labels for complex educational initiatives. Many of the labels dropped from fashion almost as soon as they became accepted. We move on to other frontiers for linguistic imperialism without consolidating our conceptual gains.

If we are honest, we acknowledge that estimating success or failure of educational initiatives is a highly complex task and one which most of us find difficult. It is made more difficult when we do not assimilate new challenges into the language of our debates and, more importantly, into our practices — the work of schools. It is a fruitless task to talk about the effects of a change when we have not established agreements in principle and in practice on the task before us. The imperatives for immediate action implied by centrally devised educational rhetoric can, by hastening it, impair genuinely constructive educational change. Throwing out challenges to schools under the persuasive labels of human relations and career education, for example, often predetermines processes of change that should be part of the working of an observant and sensitive school-based community. These convenient sorts of labels can invite fragmented and short-lived responses by school communities where new and inadequately-understood initiatives are tacked on to existing frameworks. At times, new subjects, new positions for teachers and new advisory bodies and

committees have all been created without the recourse to fundamental questions like 'how does learning occur?' and 'what are the purposes of schooling?'

Transition education sits in a prominent position in the current hierarchy of educational rhetoric. Proponents of transition education ask schools actively to acknowledge that schooling is in part a process of preparation for adult life and consequently schools are asked to equip students to make this transition confidently and competently. By its very nature, however, transition education is an educational concept that invites contribution from the community at large. Employers, governments, and parents do not have to be persuaded to adopt positions on how students should be prepared for adult life, and rightly so. But the danger remains that we will perpetuate a vigorous yet unclear debate among competing parties, with schools sitting uncomfortably in the middle of the battlefield, when the constructive approach would be to assist schools and their communities to reappraise their tasks and roles and formulate constructive responses to contemporary challenges.

Transition education?

By conceiving our current problems of education as 'transition problems', we generate a certain way of seeing them. What are the problems? The core problems to which the Commonwealth Transition Program is a response are unemployment, technological change, changes in the structure of the workforce and changes in the occupations available to young people (on one side of the 'transition' from school), and changes in schooling and school retention rates (on the other). The idea of a 'transition' program suggests that we can solve these problems simultaneously by working back from the problems of immediate post-school experience into experience in school —especially immediately before leaving.

The image of 'transition' invites us to think about these problems at the boundaries of schools and post-secondary education and employment. The image suggests that fine-tuning at the edges of our educational institutions can minimise the problems.

This image of transition, and its invitation to cast our current social and educational problems as boundary-problems, has the effect (for some at least) of absolving institutions of the responsibility for more thorough-going structural change.

In consequence, many transition programs in schools are peripheral to the main provision of the school, peripheral to its central responsibilities to students and communities, and peripheral in terms of the participation of key staff (and key students and community members). These transition programs provide an air-lock between school experience and post-school experience; they need not, and in many cases do not, fundamentally affect the structure of schools.

It may be argued that, if schools accept this state of affairs, there is no other possibility than that they will lose their capacity to educate.

If schools are overly responsive to post-school demands, especially those of employment, they must adapt to economic concerns and take for granted the economic framework of society; if they take their role as one of preparing students for participation in the given economic structure, they undermine their task of identifying and understanding values and value-systems in our culture, of raising and exploring questions of social justice, and of contributing to the critical development of our culture. As P. Herbst has argued, they undermine their justification of their work as education:

> 'The education of a student is an end in itself, and the making of [her or] him is our noblest work. This work requires no further justification, and by attempting to justify it further, in terms of the values of the consumer society, we only succeed in undermining it.' ('Work, labour and university education', in *The philosophy of education*, edited by R.S. Peters. London: Oxford University Press, 1973, p 71)

In short, there can be no such thing as 'transition education' — there can only be education which is critically concerned with the problems of the 'transition' relationship between school and community, school and society.

Some schools recognise this. They see that the problems of 'transition' raise fundamental issues about the nature of education and the nature of society. They argue that it is the job of schools to raise fundamental questions about the nature of society; without being concerned to help students understand, form views about, and reflect critically upon society they would not be educational institutions at all.

At the same time, however, schools cannot take primary responsibility for changing society. There are other institutions which have that responsibility in far greater measure. However, like other institutions, schools do have some role in changing society: by giving students and teachers one kind of experience rather than another, they change society. School are social institutions; by creating some forms of school life rather than others, they create forms of life which, to greater or lesser degrees, reproduce or transform society.

Origins of the 'transition problem'

We want to argue that the 'transition problem' is a problem of the nature of institutionalised schooling. Since the early 1830s, when the classroom system became established as the primary organisational form for schooling in Britain, schools have evolved as highly specialised institutions. Indeed, many of our major social institutions (the police force, hospitals, welfare organisations) underwent rapid development as recently as the nineteenth century. Industrialisation and urbanisation created new problems of social order; as pre-industrial society finally succumbed to industrial, new institutions sprang up to organise and order the mass of people within the economic framework made possible by industrialisation. The State, long responsible for public order, began to take responsibility for ordering society for production through fostering the institutions, notably schools, which prepared people to assume particular roles in the workplace and in society.

Within the nineteenth century framework, schools were models of the factory system. The 'classroom system' was designed explicitly with the model and the needs of the factory system in mind. By the end of the century, schooling became compulsory in Britain and Australia, and gradually the school leaving age was raised. The population of students increased, and the internal organisation of schools was differentiated to meet the apparent needs of an increasingly diverse student body: diverse in age, aptitude and willingness to attend.

Following the so-called law of differentiation and specialisation (widely evident in an increasingly technological society), these dynamics of the development of schools generated different kinds of schools, different subjects, different teaching methods, and different expectations about schooling, both among students and among the adult population whose views on schooling were shaped within the school system.

It would be extravagant to argue that the development of schools went on oblivious to changes in society at large. But the professionalisation of education and of the public administration of schools created the conditions under which the specialised organisation of schooling could become introverted. Classical and craft traditions in schooling could become taken for granted as historical necessities, justified by a Platonic view of the ordering of society. The rise of liberalism in the West injected a new egalitarian spirit into schools with the progressive movement of the early twentieth century, but its appeal was to the middle classes (whose schooling was often outside the State system), and its message and methods were individualistic, so the diluted spirit of progressivism entering the public school system fostered meritocratic ideals under the guise of 'individual differences'. Schooling continued to serve the interests of the economic order by providing the labour market with school leavers whose different kinds and levels of training fitted them to the kinds and 'levels' of work available.

Post-industrial society has radically altered the labour market. Its pattern of entry-points is markedly different to that 'predicted' by our school system which was designed for a nineteenth century economic and social structure. And there are fewer available jobs. The solution to the problems of the 'interface' between school and the labour market does not lie in more of the same kind of education, nor in bridges between school provision and labour market needs which translate into temporary and brief add-on programs to re-sort those school leavers who fail to find work after the initial sorting by the school system. It appears that a more fundamental reorientation of the education system is required. Add-on transition programs of a few weeks or months cannot hope to transport students into the late twentieth century from the nineteenth century organisation of the school system.

Preservation of the separate school

The bridges that these add-on programs are intended to provide between school and society cannot and do not bring schools and society closer together. On the contrary, such programs tend to institutionalise their separation. Building bridges may be a way of trying to overcome the more obvious disjunctions in the relationship between schooling and employment. Nevertheless, 'building bridges' can also be a way of accepting and taking for granted the separateness of schools which have developed according to the dictates of education systems, administrative bureaucracies and even professional educators who have been more preoccupied with issues within schools (the territory of the timetable, developing curricula to cope with the knowledge explosion) than those outside them. Since the curriculum response of the last two decades (and more) has always been to add new programs when new initiatives are demanded of schools, it is not surprising that transition programs are the reflex response to the challenges of transition problems. The program-building reflex seems almost instinctive after the evolutionary processes of recent decades, but, as we shall see, it is short-sighted and contributes to the maladaptation of schools to society.

It must be conceded that working on transition programs can bring a school to consider the issues at stake. Certainly, many schools have begun by building add-on transition programs and have found that they do not significantly affect students or their chances. And so they have looked deeper into schooling and society in a search for more permanent and more profound responses. Building transition programs can help a school realise the contradictions of transition education concretely, and push it towards confronting the deeper issues in quite practical ways.

It is worth examining three kinds of responses schools have made to the problem of transition to expose the contradictions they imply. Though intended to ease the transition of students from school, each is in fact a way of preserving the practices and organisation of the separate school. Add-on transition programs have often been designed around one or more of three key ideas: relevance, transferable skills, and preparation for adult life.

Relevance

Add-on transition programs often stress the 'relevance' of the activities they embody to post-school life. They may involve simulations of work situations, practice at self-presentation for job interviews, practice in filling in forms (to buy a car, open a bank account, fill in a tax return, register for unemployment benefits), or the like. These activities are not necessarily bad or non-educational in themselves. Their very existence, however, does highlight some concerns.

The first is that these 'relevant' curriculum components are provided to only a certain group in the school. They are a desperate measure to redress the previous inappropriate curriculum experiences that have caused this group to be labelled as being 'at risk'. Estranged from the regular curriculum by its failure to engage their concerns and interest, and classified by processes of assessment and selection as unsuited to its demands, these students are then offered basic, practical, commercial or domestic skill training as if this could recompense them for the years of education they have lost. By this stage, their educational needs are so acute that much stronger medicine than this is required. Perhaps what is offered is relevant in that the students may be better able to fill in standard forms or dress more appropriately for interview — and maybe these performances will help them to present better in the competition for employment. These 'achievements' may be relevant, but they are also trite. Perhaps some of the causes of this situation are within the responsibility of students; clearly some are in the province of the school, the curriculum and teaching practices. Schools might do well to dispense with relevance as a term for justifying curriculum provision, and replace it with a notion of curriculum authenticity (authenticity in the sense that it is grounded in the experiences and life circumstances of students and their community), with all that implies.

The contradiction, however, is that those components of the curriculum that are offered because of their relevance are generally not considered worthy components of the regular curriculum. As the school too often sees the pathology to be in the student, not in the regular curriculum of the school, relevance only emerges as an issue when the student can no longer

demonstrate sufficient aptitude to master the regular curriculum. Whether or not the **regular** curriculum is relevant is not open to question. Thus the school can continue to perpetuate curricula which breed advantage in some as naturally as they breed disadvantage in others, knowing full well that those who succeed are unlikely to be hindered by the lack of exposure to the components of the at risk students' relevant curriculum. In the regular curricula, relevance is not the issue, but success is.

The contradiction is that in promoting relevance these add-on programs expose the irrelevance of the regular curriculum. Adding 'relevant' programs is a way of insulating the irrelevant and introverted concerns of some school curricula from the forces for change.

Transferable skills

Schools and research agencies are urged by policy-makers to identify 'transferable skills' — skills which can be transferred from school work to work beyond school. Once these skills are identified, it is argued, transition programs can be created to foster their development. Such an orientation has been adopted by some agencies as a counter to the advocates of the 'back to basics' push in schools and as a measure to broaden the narrow focus of the early transition problem debates. It is argued that young people need skills and experiences other than those that the regular academic curriculum tends to provide. These transferable skills included such things as the ability to work co-operatively, make decisions, adapt to unfamiliar circumstances and so forth. This particular definition of transferable skills redirected some of the focus of debate and activity in schools and as such was a useful interim concept. Its initial appeal as a solution to the transition problem now emerges as being illusory however, as it has not helped schools to critically explore the nature of schools or their relationship to the workplace and to their local community. Rather it has been conceived by many as a strategy that does not significantly challenge current schooling orientations.

Secondly, the notion of transferable skills conjures up a list of elementary functions from which the complex functions of post-school life and work are composed. But which are the elementary particles of the substance of social life? Reading? Language? Number skills? As has been stated, schools already work diligently at the development of these skills. The notion of transferable skills invites us to believe that there may be some other set of elements than these familiar ones. The appeal of the notion is not to be found in a search for the elementary particles of human knowledge. It lies elsewhere, in the interests of those outside schools who want schools to provide them with people equipped to perform the particular tasks they have in mind. But of course there is no agreement among these groups about the set of particular skills needed. One can imagine, somewhat cynically, what some alternative transferable skills might be: the skill of following instructions, 'fitting in', applying oneself diligently to tasks without understanding their general import, and the like. Schools already do a good job in training these capacities; perhaps a better job than they should.

The point is that some views of transferable skills place a premium on certain skills wanted outside school for purposes (usually for production) which may or may not be in the interests of students themselves or in the interests of a just and rational society.

But the central contradiction of the notion of transferable skills is its illusion that what school leavers need to have is a finite set of specific competencies. And it is appropriate to say 'need to have' rather than 'need to know'. Knowledge is not an accumulation of particular bits of information and particular operating skills. It is present when one can interpret situations thoughtfully and act in them appropriately. It cannot be broken down into component parts, learned, and reassembled like a machine. The notion of transferable skills creates, preserves and extends the fragmentation of knowledge; it devalues knowledge by treating it as mere information, mere competencies. Rather than fitting students for work and life more responsively, reflectively and practically, a program based on transferable skills may merely train them to perform fixed tasks within fixed frameworks. At a time when our culture demands more sensitive, integrated and constructive responses to difficult social, economic and technical problems, advocates of programs based on transferable skills propose the further fragmentation of knowledge from its roots in history and practice.

Preparation for adult life

Perhaps the most innocent-sounding of these three ideas for justifying add-on transition programs is the idea of 'preparation'. What could schools be for if not to prepare students for adult life? Given our increasingly complex society, is it not natural that schools should prepare students at even greater length than ever before?

The idea of preparation, too, contains its contradictions. The more we assert the necessity of preparation for life, the more we assert that school life is not real life at all, but something which precedes real life and which must be different from it.

The myth of schooling as a preparation for life exploits this contradiction. Firstly, it justifies delaying student entry to adult life — and especially the workforce. And of course we are willing to conspire in this apparently innocuous mystification because it suits our view of ourselves as having attained, if not earned, wisdom. We could, more realistically, point to our self-interests: delaying student entry to the workforce helps to keep us in work.

Secondly, the myth of preparation justifies making schooling something other than 'real life' —it justifies the artificialities of school life in the discourse of the classroom, and of setting students long and complex exercises which have no apparent meaning outside their own rules: the rules of the classroom game. (Consider the teaching of algorithms for long division when long division is so infrequently used in real life and decreasingly used with the advent of the pocket calculator.)

The notion of preparation justifies the artificiality of school life. It denies that students' school lives are real. And it denies that their home and community experiences are the starting-point and the subject-matter of education, and that the articulation, interpretation and differentiation of their experiences are its goal.

Each of these ideas — relevance, transferable skills and preparation — contains contradictions which perpetuate the separateness of the school from the society at large. Looked at differently, we can see that they are used to justify the irrelevance, insularity, fragmentation and artificiality of many conventional school curricula. Far from integrating the work of schools into the work and life of the community, they isolate the school and institutionalise its isolation.

Beyond the separate school

Add-on transition programs are barricades built on the boundaries of the separate school.

Solutions at the imagined boundary between school and society, the point of transition, can be no more than palliatives. They are band-aid solutions. The long-term solution to the transition problem must be found in the school as a part of mainstream society, not as a separate and isolated element. The long-term solution of the transition problem must be a transformation of schools as we know them, not a tinkering at the edges of our present structures.

The image of the separate school has emerged partly as a process of specialisation of function in a society which has developed and maintained some of its stabilities through institutionalising many of its essential functions. But the internal dynamics of the separate school now govern its development in an unprecedented way. Its curricula run the risk of losing credibility with a concerned and interested public which has begun to recognise that it does not understand much of what goes on in schools and that some of the things it does understand it does not like.

To overcome the isolation of the separate school will require far-reaching changes in schools and in society. It is not surprising that those of us who are educators help to build such barricades: it is we who must change if we are to undertake the reintegration of curricula into the mainstream of social life, we who will become visible, and we who will live with the consequences of the changes we propose. The political reality is that our curricula have been found wanting, that we have in any case become visible, and that we are living with the consequences of our present ways of working. Such is the centrality of schools to our society that our students, their parents and our communities must also live with the consequences of our action or inaction.

It is possible to imagine some varieties of schools more suited to our contemporary situation. Schools are experimenting with new structures and new curricula to respond to the changes. And community groups are establishing and influencing schools in their own attempts to come to terms with present problems and future possibilities.

To put the real question of the relationship between schools and society back in focus, we must return to the fundamental proposition that schools are part of society, not separate from it. We must consider schooling as a social process, and we must consider the purpose of this process.

The problems we have been outlining are not problems perceived by us in isolation. Academic analysts of schooling, social scientists and concerned community members have commented at length on the problems of the school as a specialised institution. More importantly for our purposes, many Victorian teachers have recognised the problems, and they have begun to reconstruct schools to overcome them.

Some of the recent trends in educational innovation can be seen as pioneering forays on the frontiers of Australian education. While few schools have managed a reconstruction so thorough that it produces a new view of schooling as a coherent whole, these explorations have begun to mark out a new territory for education — or, perhaps we should say they have found a way to reconcile schooling with society while retaining an educational impulse as central to their work.

Some of the trends of the last decade of Victorian education which lead us to this conclusion are: the development of community schools, the school-based curriculum movement, the integrated studies movement, the negotiation of the curriculum movement, the language in learning movement, youth participation schemes, non-sexist and counter-sexist curricular activities, participatory decision-making initiatives, the development of school-based in-service education, the teacher-as-researcher (action research) movement (which has come to view students as researchers too), rising interest in enquiry-based teaching and learning, and concern with descriptive and work-based assessment as alternatives to competitive asessment.

These initiatives deal with separate aspects of the problems of specialised, institutionalised schooling. They are motivated by a common critical recognition of the limits and problems of the separate school. (Appendix 1 outlines some useful starting-points for schools and teachers interested in pursuing these initiatives in their own work.)

To help clear the ground for a reappraisal of schooling, we will now consider the relationship between educational principles and social principles as they are expressed in different orientations to curriculum.

2
Orientations to curriculum

Educational principles are social principles. Our views of education, and hence of schooling, have their justification in views of society and the proper role of education for participation in the life and work of society. The politicisation of the transition problem, and the rhetoric of transition make it clear that the contemporary debate about transition is, in reality, an argument about different views of the role of education in society.

Education is like football in the sense that different people prefer the game to be played in different ways. Here two ideas are relevant: style and code. Dogged determination and controlled virtuosity are differences of style. Preferences between styles can only be tested where there are agreements about code. Differences of code are more fundamental: they are agreements about how the game is to be played. Australian Rules, Rugby Union, Rugby League, Soccer and 'gridiron' are different codes of football - different games. There are equally significant differences between codes in education: they are points of view about how the game of education is to be played.

The problem is that people tend to construe differences between codes in education as differences of style. And that hides the fact that there are profound disagreements about what education is and what it is for.

Our aim in presenting three 'orientations' to curriculum is to tease out some of the differences between codes in education. Sometimes ideas from all three orientations to education jostle uneasily in the views of a single person. We would argue that a coherent view of education cannot be composed of fragments of all three orientations. School communities typically embrace protagonists of all three orientations; the curricula which their schools present are therefore practical compromises between positions. Sometimes these compromises are unhappy amalgams which place students and teachers in the difficult position of having to live through a confusing array of roles and competing aspirations. But that is the nature of social life.

We do not believe that individual teachers, students, parents, or even whole schools can easily adopt one orientation as a practical matter. The realities of social interchange and momentary circumstances are different: one can live by ideals but only saints and martyrs can sacrifice all to them. Why, then, do we present these three orientations? They are not intended to be counsels of perfection, nor is it our intention to entrench conflict between views. The three orientations are curriculum positions which are internally consistent and conceptually distinct.

The analysis of orientations presented here is offered as a contribution to the current debate about transition education. It attempts to put each orientation in a context of social and educational values and to relate these to crucial schooling processes like learning, assessment and teacher-student relationships. If it is successful, it will stimulate debate about the language of transition education and a more searching analysis of transition education policy and practice.

We should point out that there is nothing particularly new about these orientations. They represent rather general views about education and its role in society; each has its own critical history and literature.

The three orientations we have chosen to present are the vocational/neo-classical, the liberal/progressive, and the socially-critical. A word about each of these labels may be in order.

The vocational/neo-classical orientation

The vocational/neo-classical orientation is one in which education is understood as a preparation for work. For some this will be skilled or semi-skilled labour requiring well-known and defined competencies; for others, it will be managerial or professional, requiring higher levels of general education and abstract, universalised thinking. The vocational/neo-classical orientation finds a place for both in separate education systems (for example, in the technical/high school split in Victoria). Proponents of this orientation see themselves as 'realist': the world is hierarchically-ordered and the best endowed (in ability and background) will in any case find their way to the most rewarding positions.

Proponents of this orientation take the view that education merely reflects the principles of the wider society; at its most active, it recognises endowment early, selects appropriately, and prepares students efficiently to participate effectively in the society which awaits them beyond school.

The vocational/neo-classical orientation is 'vocational' in two senses: in the sense that it prepares students for work, and in the sense that it identifies and develops the sense of vocation students reveal through their participation in school life. It is 'neo-classical' in the sense that its view of the substance of education is based on time honoured beliefs about what is worth knowing (skills and disciplinary knowledge), revived and reinterpreted for the modern world.

The liberal/progressive orientation

The liberal/progressive orientation takes a different view of education as preparation: it sees education as a preparation for life rather than work. Taking the point further, it sees education as for the 'whole person' rather than as instrumental; as a personal value to be developed rather than as a set of tools to be used in work. And it sees society as open to (and needing) reconstruction. This reconstruction can be achieved only through the development of society's future citizens — and by preparing each and every one to participate in its improvement. Education must develop a sense of the good, true and beautiful in every child, and can do this by recognising these virtues in children and building on them through creative and engaging tasks. It takes an individualist perspective on social philosophy, and sees the development of autonomous persons as the aim of education.

Certainly the liberal/progressive orientation sees society as in need of improvement, but, both in persons and in democratic structures in society at large, it sees the means for improvement as already available, waiting to be used in their turn by a new generation of men and women of good will. It is 'liberal' in the sense that it sees education as the liberation of persons by reason, both individually (through development of reasoning) and socially (through democratic processes of reasoned debate).

The socially-critical orientation

The socially-critical orientation is less sanguine about the improvement of society. If changes are to be wrought in our social structures, its proponents claim, then individual virtue and individual action will be insufficient to bring them about. They must be brought about by collective action capable of confronting unjust and irrational social structures. According to the proponents of the socially-critical orientation, education must engage society and social structures immediately, not merely prepare students for later participation. It must engage social issues and give students experience in working on them — experience in critical reflection, social negotiation and the organisation of action. Education must develop the power of constructively critical thinking, not just in individuals but also in group processes. The substance of education, according to this orientation, must emphasise social and critically-reflective processes, not only what history has thrown up as worth knowing. Indeed, much of what history bequeathes us is a product of irrational and unjust processes, and it must be understood and criticised as such.

Notwithstanding this, the socially-critical school seeks to locate and interpret current culture within an historical context as well as through the immediate process of action and reflection.

The socially-critical orientation sees right knowledge and right action together; it does not value only knowledge and leave action to follow. It therefore requires participation of the school in the life of its community and of the community in the school. It embodies these values in a constant interaction between them, in critical thinking about social problems, and in critical self-reflection by students and teachers on their actions.

Of course the school is not regarded by proponents of the socially-critial orientation simply as a mechanism for social change: it is a special place where students can develop social life through considered action, a place where some of the demands of participation in social life are relaxed in order to provide time for learning. But the socially-critical orientation is also one in which schools are regarded as social structures related to other social structures. Thus, schools must model and encourage self-reflection by all who inhabit them. In this way, the socially-critical orientation attempts to reconcile principle and precept — by making and remaking the curriculum and the school through a process of negotiation among those concerned.

The three orientations to curriculum

To differentiate the three orientations, we have used eighteen topics which describe the view taken within each orientation to: knowledge, desired student outcomes, the student's learning role, learning theory, the teacher's role, the teacher-student relationship, assessment, classroom organisation, control, school decision-making, broad curriculum organisation (eg timetabling), teaching spaces (architecture) and resources, the role of parents, the community and school-community liaison, society, process of curriculum change, the roles of consultants, and the 'transition problem'.

The matrix which follows sets out the orientations in terms of the stances they take on each of these topics.

Table 1: Three orientations to curriculum

VIEW OF	VOCATIONAL/NEO-CLASSICAL	LIBERAL-PROGRESSIVE	SOCIALLY-CRITICAL
KNOWLEDGE	Objective: a public matter; exists in books, performances; mostly described as skills and information, (facts, concepts) which have their meaning and significance in occupational or disciplinary contexts; special concern is for the technical/rational/scientific/managerial interests of knowledge (knowledge for control). Strong split between 'mental' and 'manual' (skills) aspects of knowledge.	Subjective: a 'private' or individual matter; exists in accomplishments or 'in the head' of the individual; mostly described as learnings, attitudes and living skills which have meaning and significance in the individual's life context and the culture; special concern is for the practical/expressive/cultural interests of knowledge for communication, deliberation and refinement. Integration of mental/manual in individual work.	Dialectical: an interplay of subjective views of the world and the historical and cultural frame-works in which they are located. Sees knowledge as constructed through social interaction and thus as historically, culturally, politically and economically located. This kind of knowledge is not easily specified: it has its meaning in actions or projects whose significance is in specific historical, political and economic contexts. It places a central value on the role of knowledge in social action: the emancipatory interests of knowledge (knowledge for social justice through critique and collaboration). Mental and manual aspects of knowing are integrated in group work.
DESIRED STUDENT OUTCOMES	Finding one's place in society, having the skills to fulfill work roles.	The 'educated person': one who is self actualising, reflective, and potent as a human being who has learned how to learn and to pursue his/her own vision of the true and the good.	A critical and constructive co-participant in the life and work of society, who sees self-actualisation in a social context, who pursues the true and the good in transforming and being transformed by society, not purely individualistically.
STUDENT LEARNING ROLE	A receiver of transmitted knowledge, more or less prepared or motivated to achieve within the framework of what is taught.	An active constructor of knowledge through experience and opportunities to discover and enquire, more or less able to take advantage of opportunities in terms of preparation and own previous experience.	A co-learner, using available knowledge through interaction with others in socially-significant tasks of critique or collaborative work.
LEARNING THEORY	Behaviourism; deficit models of the learner: 'transmission' theories of learning, eg Skinner, Ausubel, Gagne.	Constructivist-interactionist; models of the learner as building cognitive structures through interaction, eg Dewey, Piaget.	Social constructivist-interactionist model of the learner as reconstructing in his/her own knowledge a social reality that is socially constructed and subject to reconstruction through historical and political processes, eg Berger and Luckman, Foucault, Gramsci, Althusser, Marcuse, Habermas.

VIEW OF	VOCATIONAL/NEO-CLASSICAL	LIBERAL-PROGRESSIVE	SOCIALLY-CRITICAL
TEACHER'S ROLE	An authority, transmitting knowledge, structuring and sequencing what is known to allow the students to achieve mastery.	A 'mentor' or facilitator, organising learning opportunities to allow the student to take advantage of opportunities and achieve autonomy.	A project organiser and resource person, organising critical and collaborative activities in negotiation with students and community, demanding joint values of autonomy and social responsibility.
TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP	Teacher is in authority, uses directive pedagogy, controls progress; a hierarchical relationship imposing learning; uses affection for motivation; based on one-to-many relationship of teachers to students.	Teacher is a leader with recognised knowledge and concern for student growth; progressively yields control as students are able to exercise self-control within the social and cultural framework of expectations; based on ideal of one-to-one relationship of teachers to students.	Teacher is a coordinator with an emancipatory aim, involves students in negotiation about common tasks and projects; emphasises commonality of concerns and works though conflicts of interest in terms of social justice based on many-to-many relationships between community, teachers and students.
ASSESSMENT	Tests for acquisition of what is known, mastery of skills and propositional knowledge.	Descriptive assessment, project work, informal means of assessment; teacher looks for evidence of individual growth in social and cultural framework.	Negotiated assessment, peer assessment, work-based ('goal-based') assessment within a framework of negotiated requirements for successful completion of work; teacher and co-learners, look for evidence of contribution to action, critical response to social-political context of school and community.
CLASSROOM ORGANISATION	Homogeneous grouping, streaming, selection, 'formal' classroom arrangement for lecture-recitation or manual skill acquisition.	Essentially aims at individualisation through school organisation; requires heterogeneous grouping, mixed ability arrangements; based on ideal of individual student-tutor relationship; 'informal' classroom arrangements for discussion, small-group and individual project work; explorations into community and resource centres.	Heterogeneous, mixed-ability arrangement with cross-age and cross-ability tutoring (ability is more or less irrelevant); 'informal' classroom arrangement for group work, projects; boundaries between classroom, school and community are weak; groupings overlap boundaries of age and school/community geography and are defined for specific projects of social concern and consequence which are carried out with critical intent.
CONTROL	Strongly and visibly hierarchical for teachers as well as students: status = power.	Weakly though visibly hierarchical for teachers and students; status and power are based on merit.	Shared responsibility, both participatory and representative democratic structures for control: status is theoretically irrelevant: aims deliberately at power-sharing and participatory control.

VIEW OF	VOCATIONAL/NEO-CLASSICAL	LIBERAL-PROGRESSIVE	SOCIALLY-CRITICAL
SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING	The teacher is an operative or instrument within the system; decisions are taken at the top of the hierarchy; sharing of decision-making is based on specialisation of functions within a strong control structure.	The teacher is an independent and autonomous professional; decision-making is weakly hierarchical and consultative, based on assumed commonality of interests within the cultural framework.	Teachers, administrators, students and community are interdependent; participatory decision-making structures exist wherever possible (the exercise of individual power is constrained within formal limits).
BROAD CURRICULUM-ORGANISATION	Rigid subject differentiation and timetabling; stringent selection of students based on performance criteria.	Weak subject differentiation and timetabling; selection of students on basis of interest and readiness.	Differentiation of subjects and use of time based on negotiation between community, teachers and students about the whole curriculum as a 'project'; 'selection' is based on commitment to tasks, the limits of resources, expertise and capacity to participate productively in common activities.
TEACHING SPACES AND RESOURCES	'Closed', 'formal'; differentiated by subject specialisms (with a known hierarchy of status of spaces, subjects, teachers and students); strong differentiation between school and non-school resources, subject/departmental resources.	'Open', 'informal'; differentiation between work-spaces in relation to resource requirements (with an ambiguous status hierarchy between spaces, subjects, teachers and students); integration of spaces and resources around individual learning tasks; weak differentiation between school and non-school resources.	Weak boundaries between spaces with use dependent on resources available and tasks in hand; boundaries between school and non-school resources, subject resources are blurred; integration of spaces and resources around group activities and learning tasks.
ROLE OF PARENTS	Non-professional support; parents as clients.	Individual consultation, ancillary support and involvement; especially at the level of individual students.	Participation and negotiation at all levels, though most evidently at the level of the whole school.
COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LIAISON	Community as clients; liaison school-directed, though school is seen as in a dependency relationship with society at large; school is in *loco parentis*.	Community as context, school as independent or interdependent; liaison is seen as mutual support and co-operation, though effectively school-controlled (based on professional expertise).	Interdependence and interaction between school and community; school may take initiatives in community as well as 'on behalf of the community' within school; 'liaison' regarded as merely procedural, reciprocal interaction is the preferred goal.
SOCIETY	School prepares and selects students for participation in society which is taken for granted as a structured system of inequalities; school has a role in maintaining, reproducing and legitimating social, economic, political structures and division by preparing students to compete successfully for opportunities, especially in professions and trades.	School prepares students to participate in the reconstruction of society, each to the level of his or her abilities; school is seen as civilising for all and as having a subsidiary role in preparing the best of its students for socially responsible use of their talents and attainments.	School and society reflect one another; school may help in overcoming social inequities and preparing students for participation in social, political and economic activities, with a stress on socially, morally and politically justifiable conflict resolution.

VIEW OF	VOCATIONAL/NEO-CLASSICAL	LIBERAL-PROGRESSIVE	SOCIALLY-CRITICAL
PROCESS OF CURRICULUM CHANGE	A deficit model; bringing curricula up to date with new knowledge and prescriptions from authorities; 'top-down' specification of new curricula which are implemented by teachers; a technical process.	An active professional model; respects autonomy of the teacher to act professionally in the interests of students; reformist; teacher-based rather than school-based; a practical process.	A process of negotiation in the classroom, the school and the community; sees change in its social and historical context and requiring collaborative action; school- and community-based, not teacher-based; a dialectic of change and stability, continuity and discontinuity, reform and resistance; an emancipatory process.
CONSULTANTS' ROLES	Expert outsiders specify new curricula, provide recommendations for change to authorities; expert evaluators measure the extent to which desired changes have been achieved in implementation of programs.	Experts inform curriculum-building and change processes, but teachers take responsibility for decisions about what will be done in the light of this advice; 'process consultants' are used to facilitate the reform process; evaluation by outsiders who provide teachers with descriptions of what is being achieved but leaving teachers to judge for themselves.	Outsiders, where they are called in for consultancy tasks, are contributors to a collaborative school- and community-based process; they are resources; curriculum development and evaluation are continuing aspects of curriculum negotiation; the school is collectively committed to self-reflection (eg through action research and school-based in-service education).
VIEW OF THE 'TRANSITION PROBLEM'	Schools are failing to prepare young people for work adequately. Transition programs (often of the add-on variety) should remediate specific deficiencies, should be targeted to 'at-risk' students and aim at specific skill areas relevant to the job interview situation and specific work areas.	Schools are failing to give students the confidence and competence to participate in contemporary society and to prepare themselves for life and careers. Society, too, is failing its youth. Transition programs should develop 'survival skills' in those most needing help, but more ambitious programs, emphasising understanding self and the modern world, should be integrated into the general curriculum for all students.	Schools and society are out of touch with one another. Economic, social and historical forces have produced changes which require a transformation of the nature and role of schooling. Transition programs are catalysts for this transformation, but require far-reaching changes in the whole curriculum. Transformation aims at realising the ideal of the 'adaptive school' (described by the Schools Commission's report on Schooling for 15 and 16 year olds), partly through internal change in the school but also through fostering the development of a reciprocally-adaptive community (ie through community development). This kind of school-community relationship is based on the school as a resource for learning, research and critical analysis in its community.

3
The key images of the socially-critical school

As we have indicated, different orientations to curriculum reflect and embody different views of transition: the vocational/neo-classical orientation takes the present social and economic framework of society more or less for granted, and conceives of transition in occupational terms. It sees studentship as an occupation which needs to be fitted to the occupational structure of society. The liberal/progressive orientation takes the development of the individual as its starting-point, and sees transition as a movement into adulthood which will either preserve or constrain opportunities for continuing development of the person. It also sees society in individualistic terms: through the present economic and political structures of society individuals may make or mar their chances for personal fulfilment.

The socially-critical orientation sees society as problematic: it accepts neither occupational structures nor the social, economic or political structures of society as given, and it recognises that all social structures must be critically understood in relation to a more general social philosophy (and view of social organisation) and a more general moral philosophy (and view of individual action in its social context). It treats education as the process of reflection on the physical, intellectual and social world. What is distinctive about education, according to the socially-critical view, is that it attempts to help students and communities to understand the structures and values of our society and culture, and to evaluate them. In short, it concerns itself with critical understanding, critical evaluation, and informed commitment to the improvement of society. The distinction of role between school and society is not symbolised as a structural boundary between them, needing a concept of transition to bridge the gap, but as a distinction of activities with the education of critical social awareness being the primary task for the school and one which is essential for any democratic society. Thus the socially-critical orientation cannot treat the problems of transition as boundary problems. It recognises that education cannot be more compelling for students if present educational structures are taken for granted and schools merely tinker at the edges of their provision without more fundamental reconsideration of what they do. Critical self-reflection is a central task of the socially-critical school; without critical reflection on the principles and practices of school-life and school-work, the school cannot embody and model critical reflection in society at large.

How does the socially-critical school understand itself?

Firstly, the socially-critical school regards itself as a **community,** within a community. Its boundaries with its local community are open and freely crossed. Its boundary of its concerns with the concerns of its society and culture are similarly open. Boundaries of age and occupation between the socially-critical school and its community and society are not respected. The socially-critical school is a learning community; its purpose is education and it conceives its educational role as both individual and social: individually it aims to liberate authentic insight and understanding in each member of its community; socially it aims to strengthen the development of common language for the orientation of common action.

Secondly, the socially-critical school recognises that what makes a community a community is **collaborative interaction:** common work, common language (communication) and joint

participation in decision-making. This is true for the school in relation to teachers and students and, to the greatest extent possible, for the involvement of students as citizens in the affairs of the community and of the community in the affairs of the school. These forms of collaboration (common work, communication and joint participation in decision-making) do not obliterate the distinctiveness of the school; on the contrary, the school plays a special role in the community which it develops and sustains through interaction. This is the special educational responsibility of self-reflection: critical thought capable of informing action.

A third element in the self-understanding of the critical school concerns **negotiation.** Negotiation is a form of interaction in which different self-interests are worked out to establish common tasks and common commitment. In negotiation, self-interests are recognised and placed in a common framework. Sometimes conflicts of interests occur: when they are irreconcilable, they mark out territory where common action cannot be taken, or where barriers must be broken down before common action can continue. Negotiation occurs in the socially-critical school about the curriculum: what will be learned and by what processes. Here we must recognise the distinct contributions of different individuals and groups to the common enterprise: the socially-critical curriculum is not one in which student interests alone define what is learned and what is taught, but one in which agreements between students and teachers are reached, on the basis of informed judgement, about what is to be learned and taught. Similarly, the community enters the negotiation, placing its concerns on the school's agenda of concerns, and urging the school to undertake critical educational action in relation to those concerns.[1]

The fourth and most important element of the socially-critical school is **self-reflection.** The socially-critical school is organised so that its own action is subject to critical development. It must constantly observe and analyse its own processes to understand whether and how they have become uncritical, doctrinaire or habitual. And it must understand its relationships in the community in this light: where constraints of habit, custom, coercion or persuasion place limits on its critical tasks, it must ask why, and discover whether these constraints are reasonable (allowing it to continue with its critical task) or unreasonable (undermining or preventing it from pursuing its critical task). The socially-critical school is a learning community, not merely in the sense that it learns about processes and ideas outside itself, but also in the sense that it continually learns about its own processes and its own critical work.

The socially-critical school must be taken seriously by its community. It can only exist in a framework of mutual trust and regard. This regard can be established only if the school can show its community that its interest is in understanding, informed action and questions of social justice and the critical development of the culture. (A society which rejects these interests cannot describe itself as rational or democratic.) Occasionally there will be conflicts between the socially-critical school and its community: in a society which is not arranged primarily on the bases of rational understanding, informed action, social justice and critical self-development, critical analysis of problems will sometimes produce unpalatable insights. The school must recognise the limitations of what its community can achieve, and be tolerant and realistic about what is achievable. So, too, the community must be tolerant of what the school can achieve: it cannot educate for critical thought if it takes on every critical task; other organisations in the community also have critical roles to fulfil.

A coherent set of principles

The four key elements of the socially-critical school are: its notion of community, including the learning community, its collaborative character, its use of negotiation, and its aim of critical self-reflection. These elements together provide a set of principles which animate the socially-critical school at a number of levels. At three levels which are immediately recognisable as about education and the curriculum, that is, at the levels of the classroom, the whole school and the school-community relations and at two other levels, these principles provide a basis for practice.

1 (Note that it urges the school to educational action, not simply social action; the school cannot merely take action uncritically without giving up its educational role. The distinctive contribution of the socially-critical school to its community is critical work; when it becomes uncritical, educational action becomes labour within an accepted social framework.)

At the level of **classroom practice,** the socially-critical classroom is one with a negotiated curriculum, with a number of implications following from this. These apply especially in the relationships between students and teachers, but also in the relationships between students. The socially-critical classroom is based on relationships of mutual recognition of all who work in them as committed to mutual understanding and common striving for consensus (symmetrical communication), and on building common commitment to group tasks (the formation of community self-interest as against allowing individual self-interests to operate unchecked in a framework in which some succeed only at the expense of others). This requires negotiation about what students learn in the light of their own concerns and interests and in the light of the concerns and interests of their community. In the socially-critical classroom, we might expect to find non-competitive assessment, peer tutoring, cross-age tutoring, mixed-ability teaching, enquiry learning, project work(group action projects) and group-directed use of resources within and outside the classroom.

At the level of the **whole school,** the same principles apply. We may expect to find participatory decision-making, school governance structures that include students, school-based curriculum development (where the whole school curriculum, rather than the segmented curriculum of the separate school is being developed), school-based in-service education, school review and improvement activities based on teacher action research, and school-based action campaigns.

At the level of **school-community relations,** the socially-critical school has mechanisms for community participation in curriculum as well as school governance, it participates in community activities (both bringing education and critical awareness out into the community in relation to community concerns, and also in participation in community health, welfare, employment and recreation activities to sense problems and to provide substantive understandings which can provoke critical reflection), and it functions as a community resource (for example, community education and the use of the school as a research resource for local organisations).

The socially-critical school operates according to principles which are consistent with two other levels of social practice: at the level of the social and political organisation of society itself, and at the level of self-reflection on individual practice. The socially-critical school thus has a social philosophy and a moral philosophy.

The set of principles we have outlined, and some of the practices they imply at these different levels, are the key principles and practices of the socially-critical school. All other principles and practices, even ones conventionally valued in schools (for example, in relation to coverage and mastery of subject-matter, motivation of students, and classroom discipline) are subordinate to these principles. And some conventional practices (for example, competitive assessment, streaming, and teacher-student relationships based on the coercive power of the teacher) are expressly denied by these principles.

The task for the socially-critical school is to constantly examine its practice in the light of its principles — and to change and develop both principles and practice in the light of this process of self-reflection.

How does a school become socially-critical?

Being socially-critical is not an end-point which can be understood as a whole and instituted as a complete pattern of practices. It is a process which must be initiated and sustained. So, to become socially-critical, a school simply begins the process and sticks to it. It maintains the process by observing and analysing its progress in being critical. As it proceeds, more of its activities will come under the ambit of its principles and the principles themselves will be fleshed out more comprehensively and more concretely. The socially-critical school is a research community. It uses a tion research as its 'method' — collaborative research for improving its own practices, its own understandings, and its own situation.

The question about how to begin is in reality less important than the question of where to begin. And that can only be decided within the school. It is a tactical question about where people are willing to begin, about the issues that concern them in their own practice and the organisation

of the school, about the problems to be faced in initiating and maintaining the process as a collaborative enterprise, and about where improvements can actually be achieved. At the beginning, a small group may begin the process; ultimately the whole school community will participate in it. For the development of the socially-critical school it is essential to establish mechanisms and relationships through which the wider school community (including parents, friends of the school, employers and others) can participate in the organisation of the learning community. Establishing such mechanisms and relationships early in the development of the socially-critical school will ensure that the school begins as it means to continue. Some schools have begun the process by analysing their forms of assessment, by introducing non-competitive/descriptive assessment. Other schools begin by establishing conditions for community participation in the school. Others begin with participatory decision-making, the negotiated curriculum, enquiry teaching, school-based curriculum development, youth participation, or the treatment of women and girls in the school. All these starting points have the capacity to generate and sustain the critical life of the socially-critical school.

Many of these initiatives have been tried in schools and have failed to produce sustained commitment to being socially-critical. Invariably, these failures occur because the fruits of the work have been judged by criteria appropriate to the separate school — for example, the criteria of efficiency and effectiveness in preparation and relevance. Many teachers have preferred to leave schools as they are in the face of a society which does not welcome critical analysis. They give up on education and accept training as an alternative. But other teachers and schools have persevered in the process, and have done so with mounting enthusiasm. For them, the socially-critical school has been a concrete expression of educational principles in action.

Teachers attempting to work within the framework of the socially-critical school consciously assist students to develop views about the kind of society they would like to live in and assist students to gain a sense of how the various manifestations of current society have evolved and are maintained. That is to say, these teachers would be concerned to provide students with learning experiences that give students an historical and critical perspective on society. Furthermore, these teachers are concerned to provide students with opportunities to engage in activities that are consistent with building a responsive, democratic society.

Such an emphasis cannot exist within the framework of the competitive academic curriculum. A socially-critical orientation requires a process of democratic, emancipatory learning that seeks to engage students in negotiating learning goals and tasks, and to equip students to participate in decision-making structures. Learning is seen as a co-operative process and the student or class as agents for producing new knowledge through interaction with others in socially significant tasks like collaborative community projects (for example, environmental surveys, labour and unemployment surveys, assessments of social needs in the health and social welfare of the community, the development of school-community newspapers and the like). These projects meet the two requirements that a. they are a response to community concerns, and b. that they engage the students in real collaborative reflection and learning from direct experience.

To achieve these kinds of aspirations, teachers structure time for negotiation and reflection and are committed to extending their own and their students' skills in small group management, listening, and discussion. Students understand that they are developing skills as participants in a learning community whose goals have been mutually determined and whose concern is to foster critical perspectives and collaborative action.

A socially-critical classroom reflects a particular view of knowledge, working knowledge. Working knowledge is constituted through the interaction of the knower and the object of knowledge in a social, cultural and historical context, and in relation to tasks or projects. It also reflects a particular view of student learning roles, that is direct and collaborative participation in learning projects, and a particular view of school community relations, that is active relationship based on community concerns and the potential to promote individual and collaborative reflection of a constructive, critical and self-critical kind.

The socially-critical orientation takes some of its key ideas from the liberal/progressive orientation but extends them into a social framework. It sees individual initiative in its social context, and sees the quest for social justice and critical development of the culture in social terms.

It requires not only an understanding of work and of the ideas of our culture as essential, but also the idea of power: students must come to understand how power is used in our society, both in the arrangements of economic processes and also in the arrangement of everyday social life itself (ideology).

To give a current example of this kind of concern, the women's movement is critical in just this way. It is not sufficient to see the inequalities of outcome produced by the socialisation processes which girls undergo, and urge girls and women to try harder within the current structure of society, hoping that inequalities may thereby be overcome. The socialisation processes themselves must be examined. And when we examine them, we see that opportunities for access to culturally and politically important social structures are limited for girls and women. The social position of women can only be improved by changing the way girls and women are treated; the social processes of socialisation must be changed for men and women, boys and girls, if social justice is to be achieved.

The socially-critical orientation to curriculum takes this notion as central: if social justice is to be achieved in society, then the curriculum of schools must be changed so that the processes of schooling are compatible with the processes of a socially-just society.

This idea provides a breakthrough for education. The socially-critical orientation takes the problems of society as its starting-point: it does not take society for granted. Is this not an overtly political stance for the school, making it a mechanism for social change rather than education, even, perhaps, subverting its educational role in favour of a political one? Advocates of the socially-critical orientation think not. They argue that it is only by taking the structures and concerns of society to be problematic, rather than as given, that the school can perform an educational task. Taking social structures for granted is to deny the essentially critical function of education, and ultimately to lose the possibility of education itself. Once this occurs, the school becomes merely a training-ground for production and consumption, and the critical educational function — that of penetrating and understanding the nature of our society and its work — is lost. Unless schools have this critical function, it is argued, they do not educate, they only train students to participate in the given structures of society.

4
Strategies for change

This section attempts to provide some strategies that would assist schools and their communities to adopt a socially-critical orientation. Schools provide a variety of 'sites' which provide opportunities for curriculum reflection and debate. Such a process can be undertaken by different groups within the school (eg senior staff, faculty or year level groups), can be 'open' or 'closed' (eg restricted to a few or open to all), can be regular or episodic (eg daily, weekly or yearly), and can focus on a wide variety of concerns (eg student discipline or the effects of a technological change). Work at these sites can give teachers, students and others a beginning in the process of realising the socially-critical school.

Although the complexity of formal and informal curriculum reflection processes for groups and individuals within schools should not be underestimated, some of these processes are more productive than others as starting points for curriculum reorientation.

As a means for reflecting upon some accepted processes for school change and those processes most conducive to assisting the socially-critical school to develop, the following table highlights the dominant concerns of the three curriculum orientations. These concerns are restricted to observations about those features of the three orientations that have obvious relevance for change strategies.

Table 2: Dominant concerns of the three orientations

	VOCATIONAL/ NEO-CLASSICAL	LIBERAL/ PROGRESSIVE	SOCIALLY-CRITICAL
School concern	preparation of students for work	preparation of students for life	engagement of students in critical thinking and action
Dominant curriculum concern	course or subject content structuring learning	issue or process facilitating student learning	critical theory and group processes or action oriented
Focus for expression of concern	faculty and subject organisation	total school teaching team	teaching team, students and community
Frequency of concern	episodic (eg prior to course construction)	on-going	on-going
Themes of concern	student discipline, teaching resources,	student participation, group process, small group management, program review	student action, group processes and community linkages, negotiating tasks

Table 2: Dominant concerns of the three orientations (continued)

	VOCATIONAL/ NEO-CLASSICAL	LIBERAL/ PROGRESSIVE	SOCIALLY-CRITICAL
Themes of concern	curriculum packages, testing procedures		developing working knowledge and critical perspective on society
	developing diligent obedient students	developing caring, co-operative environment	

An observation about the variations in concern mapped in the table above is that the needs best served by traditional school organisation and processes and by most external support agencies and processes appear to be those of the vocational/neo-classical. That is, traditional timetable structures and the typical locus for formal staff affiliations (ie faculty-based), reflect the concerns of a vocational/neo-classical orientation. Similarly, mechanisms of external support (eg subject consultants, subject associations, subject standing committees) generally reflect and respond to these same concerns.

Unless a school is aware that traditional school structures and mechanisms of external support are an expression of a curriculum orientation, and consciously develops structures and processes consistent with the socially-critical mode, then the status-quo (ie vocational/neo-classical) will remain unchallenged.

Many school structures and processes have to undergo substantial changes before they could be claimed to be reflecting the concerns of the liberal/progressive and socially-critical orientations. Such changes might well reflect the following characteristics and the achievement and maintenance of these characteristics would provide a focus for curriculum discussion. A school that was moving away from a vocational/neo-classical orientation would be providing an educational environment in which

- the students would be of mixed ability groups (streaming and setting would be avoided)
- a small, readily identifiable group of teachers would spend 'extended' periods of time with a group of students
- a team teaching approach with an emphasis on the interrelatedness of knowledge in significant tasks would be adopted
- teachers would encourage students to share in determining the directions of their own learning
- learning would be thought of as a co-operative rather than an individualistic or competitive endeavour
- content would address those controversial and contradictory elements that are inherent in and manifested by our culture
- achievement would be gauged in terms of the individual's own progress (often as part of a co-operative group), not competitively, and the curriculum would not close or narrow students' future options
- flexible timetabling arrangements allowing for substantial changes in student/teacher ratios and group or individual activities would be adopted
- processes for involving parental and community groups in, and fostering their concern for, the activities of the school would be implemented
- processes for involving the school, individual students and groups of students in action for 'social justice' within the community would be implemented.

Although these factors are in no way definitive they do provide some indication of the kinds of skills and insights required of teachers as a prerequisite to adopting a socially-critical orientation. That is, teachers would need to be capable of and confident about negotiating curriculum, deciding activities that provide opportunities for students to build working knowledge; building co-operative learning environments, forming linkages with local communities, implementing action research, working with students of various abilities, writing descriptive assessments, involving students and parents in decision-making processes, and so on. Such attributes and skills

are generally not developed by pre-service training and although they may best be acquired through teacher experimentation and experience, very often school environments are not conducive to this. In such circumstances, in-service/staff development activities, school review procedures and external consultancy may be employed as useful strategies for change.

School-based in-service education

Teachers need to be provided with support that allows them the time to reflect upon and redesign their curriculum processes and practices. They also need time to acquire and develop any new skills and techniques demanded by such a reorientation. Without this, the capacity of schools to respond to the socially-critical orientation will be greatly restricted.

One starting point for addressing the concerns expressed in this report is to establish in-service activities in schools which reflect a concern for the development of the kinds of environment, processes and skills consistent with a socially-critical orientation.

The following list provides some perspectives that could be adopted by schools engaged in developing in-service teacher development initiatives designed to foster this preferred curriculum orientation.

In-service activities

Initially these could

- generate a total school commitment to reviewing the purposes of the school in relation to the three curriculum orientations
- be planned for all staff or planned for particular groups of staff within a context of a socially-critical perspective
- seek a commitment to establish mechanisms (both within the school and within the broader community) that foster curriculum debate and reviews around the notion of the socially-critical school
- provide teachers (and others) with information about social, economic and political contexts and about networks and resources that will help facilitate the kinds of changes in school structures and practices outlined earlier.

Subsequently in-service activities could

- expose teachers to models of school organisation that permit
  - — flexible grouping
  - — team teaching
  - — more collaborative relationships between students and teachers
  - — more collaborative relationships between parents and teachers (and more generally, between the school and the wider community)
  - — integration of theoretical and experiential learning
- seek to develop a commitment for a school organisation that is conducive to the development of a socially-critical orientation
- seek a commitment to the definition of teacher roles and responsibilities in relation to the roles of others in the wider school community and consistent with a socially-critical orientation
- assist teachers, students and community members to develop management, group dynamics, co-operative and decision-making skills and skills in action research (management of change skills)
- assist teachers to develop the skills to undertake curriculum development (particularly interdisciplinary planning) and school-based assessment and evaluation
- assist teachers to develop the skills to assume a facilitative rather than directive role
- assist teachers to develop strategies that foster student participation in, and commitment to, educational practices and processes that are consistent with a socially-critical orientation
- assist teachers, students, parents and others in the community to develop strategies for fostering and securing community linkages and linkages between schools and other institutions.

Clearly, this list is not exhaustive, but it does assume that in-service activities would be dynamic, that they would follow some developmental sequence and that they would be seeking to

foster a particular educational development and achieve a clearer view of the processes and practices of a socially-critical orientation. It does not seem unreasonable to observe that such assumptions do not appear to underpin many of the in-service and staff development activities currently undertaken in schools. Most importantly, these in-service activities must employ, not just espouse, the socially-critical perspective in their design, planning, implementation and evaluation.

School reviews

School reviews often provide a starting-point for substantial curriculum reflection and clarification. In recent times, the procedure has been offered to State secondary schools and administered by representatives of the Education Department's Secondary and Technical Schools Divisions. It is a procedure that all schools could consider as a strategy for change. Some comments need to be made about the nature of this process however, since school reviews have often become primarily a means for holding the school accountable to external groups, that is, accountability may be seen as one-way, not a reciprocal relationship between the school and other agencies or the school and the community. An accountability orientation to school review may have several undesirable consequences, such as

- where the accountability is to a bureaucratically higher authority, curricula will be *de facto* dictated by that authority
- where the accounting is to parents and to other members of the local community, teachers and parents will be forced into an adversary relationship which is likely to distort any attempts at co-operation
- within schools, as teachers are likely to be put in competitive relationships, and become less open and less co-operative in relation both to one another and to parents
- within the school, as scarce resources for professional support and development may be diverted into the review process for reasons of impression management rather than genuine school improvement.

If, on the other hand, reviews are seen as an aid to curriculum development and are initiated and controlled at the school level, they can be a valuable aid to school-based curriculum development. Ideally, they should also be a means of informing those agencies responsible for resources allocation of the school's needs. In any event, though, they should be considered as part of the continuing process of curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation.

Given this perspective, school reviews should

- be on-going, providing for regular (normal) evaluation of all curricula
- be participatory, drawing in parents, teachers and students into consideration of
  - the needs and aspirations of students
  - the expectations of various community groups
  - the purposes of curricula
  - the strategies for pursuing those purposes
  - the resources available
  - the extent to which the purposes are being achieved
  - the relevance of existing purposes
- make teachers, students and parents more aware of the nature of curriculum and of the process of development
- strengthen support for the school and its curriculum which is seen as subject to negotiation and continual monitoring
- demystify evaluation, assessment and reporting in ways that ensure that these aspects of the curriculum do not come to dominate the life and work of the school
- identify the needs of the school in terms of resource provision
- develop a sense of shared responsibility for the curriculum.

Consultancy

As has been previously indicated, the nature of consultancy functions available to schools tends to support the concerns of a vocational/ neo-classical orientation. Consultants tend to be appointed within discipline areas and their task is seen to be to service the needs of teachers within that discipline area and not to raise issues of a general nature about the orientation of schools. If external agents for curriculum support do not have a mandate to raise issues about the purposes of schools and the processes of the curriculum then this situation needs to be redressed. Consultants

- need to be appointed on the basis of their understanding of the implications of curriculum processes and practices for the total school
- should be appointed on the basis of their ability to help teachers develop the expertise and confidence required for them to assume roles more consistent with a socially-critical orientation, and to help teachers fulfil consultancy roles for one another
- should establish and service networks and linkages between teachers and schools on the basis of the concerns that emerge from a socially-critical perspective. At present such linkages do not appear to be well developed or supported by persons designated as curriculum consultants
- should be encouraged to provide support throughout different stages of a school's development and for varying degrees of intensity depending on the school's requirements.

Another concern that emerges from a discussion of consultancy services is the manner in which consultants are appointed and their lines of responsibility. It would be more consistent with orientations other than the vocational/neo-classical to have some consultants appointed by clusters of schools or school and community committees rather than by centralised educational authorities. Further, it would be more consistent for consultants to be answerable to the schools for whom they provide assistance than to be answerable to a central educational authority.

5
A breaking consciousness:
towards a socially-critical perspective

In this report, we have considered the rhetoric of transition. That rhetoric is designed to stimulate reform of our schools. It is a rhetoric of hope — it seeks to persuade us that our schools can be changed by building bridges at the edges of schools, between school and work.

In our exploration of the rhetoric, we have suggested that the symbolism of bridge-building was one that institutionalised the separateness of the separate school. We have argued that add-on programs do little to reorient schools within contemporary society. The ideas of 'relevance', 'transferable skills' and 'preparation', when applied to these add-on programs, focused attention at the edges of schooling and away from the mainstream of the curriculum. At the same time, they allowed us to reveal contradictions in much contemporary curriculum: irrelevance, insularity, fragmentation and artificiality.

The three orientations to curriculum we have presented here are views about which people disagree. But we have presented them in the hope that we may clarify some of the viewpoints which lie hidden beneath some of the present debates about the 'transition problem'.

We also find hope in the current confusion about transition, though perhaps for different reasons than those advanced by advocates of add-on transition programs. The current confusion identifies a pathology in our current curriculum. It is a call to reform.

As we have seen, advocates of the three different orientations we have outlined will want to direct this reform differently. Their diagnoses are different, and so are their suggestions about what should be done. Advocates of the vocational/neo-classical orientation will find many stabilities in schools which they wish to preserve. They advocate programs which attempt to compensate 'at risk' students for what they have failed to achieve within regular curriculum provision. Advocates of the liberal/progressive view will want to 'humanise' schools and educate students for living. For some students they propose 'survival skills' programs; for the mass of students, programs which will give them greater competence and confidence to define themselves and their opportunities within and beyond school. Advocates of the socially-critical tradition see the present ailments of schools as structured and maintained by society; they propose concrete changes in the relationship between school and community to realise a critical awareness in the community and to put that awareness at the centre of the school's educational role.

The educational significance of the socially-critical school

There is a breaking consciousness in Victorian schools which has led to bold experiments in community participation in the curriculum, youth participation in curriculum decision-making, negotiated curriculum, counter-sexist educational initiatives, initiatives in non-competitive assessment, school-based curriculum development and evaluation, school-based in-service education, action research by teachers and students into curricula and teaching practices, and the like.

We believe that these are not isolated experiments but outposts on a continuous frontier. Taken together, they have begun to define the territory of the socially-critical school.

These particular developments are the products of particular historical circumstances and opportunities. They have in common a motivating idea about a school being an integral part of its

community (the adaptive school in the adaptive community), and one whose educational task is to disclose the reasons its community is as it is, so that students can locate themselves in their communities and contribute to their rational improvement. A central task in this educational project is the awakening of a critical consciousness capable of identifying how things came to be as they are and how they might be different and better — which is to say, more rational and more just. For this reason, we speak of the 'socially-critical' school.

The educational significance of the socially-critical school is that it reorders its curriculum, its organisation and its values to realise this critical and reflective orientation within the work of the school. It sets out to overcome the contradictions of irrelevance, insularity, fragmentation and artificiality by engaging students' direct experience in tasks which are real and meaningful for them and their communities, by giving them working knowledge of the use of technical know-how, language and decision-making (power) for social purposes. Real and useful work is valued by students, and mostly they enjoy learning from it, though there are frustrations to encounter and overcome which classroom exercises can simplify and avoid. But these are only motivational arguments — technical arguments — from the perspective of the socially-critical school.

Participation and collaboration in decision-making are matters of principle which go beyond these motivational concerns. If students have a real voice in deciding what to do and how their learning should proceed, then they can take responsibility for their learning. It becomes authentic, it embodies commitments which are tested in the work itself, and it transcends the self-interests of knowledge. Through self-reflection, individuals and groups can examine the problems and effects of their technical know-how, their language and communication, and their exercise of power in relation to the products and processes of their learning.

The socially-critical school is no educational panacea. It creates different problems for teachers, students and others involved in and affected by its work. Nevertheless, it presents the prospect of overcoming some of the fundamental contradictions of the separate school.

Experience with many of the initiatives taken by advocates of the socially-critical school shows that the benefits are real for students, teachers and communities. Most importantly, in the context of a curriculum for transition, the socially-critical school gives students experience of participation in the work of society. It puts the curriculum at the centre of the critical reflective process of society. In doing so, it begins where all schools mean to end — with autonomous, responsible and reflective individuals and groups ready to make a contribution to the life and work of their communities and the wider society.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Nine starting points for the socially-critical school

A sharpening in our awareness of educational possibilities does not imply that we should hastily adopt new and untested programs or approaches to replace what is already seen as useful and innovative. On the contrary, an examination of the ideal characteristics of the socially-critical school reveals many concepts and features that are indeed familiar, are seen in practice in many schools and are documented in many teacher-based writings. This approach highlights some features of the socially-critical school and those educational initiatives that are useful (and in some cases crucial) starting points in the development of the socially-critical school. By doing this, it is, in a very real sense, a way of seeing 'old' processes and practices in a new perspective: a breaking of consciousness. These starting points are not explained in any detail; rather the concepts are offered with suggestions for readings that have arisen from schools working through these programs or approaches.

It should be emphasised, however, that this appendix is concerned with starting points for a coherent and meaningful curriculum and strategies for developing a socially-critical school. A fully-realised socially-critical orientation to schooling processes pervades and influences the subtlest interactions in the school as well as being observable in the construction of programs and courses. The socially-critical orientation is not comprised of the sum of certain prescribed and favoured programs. As an orientation to schooling it cannot be understood, let alone attained, if the view of change is restricted to large-scale organisational change. It also requires that we, as teachers, change our ways of working - our practice as well as our programs.

1. The negotiated curriculum

Boomer (1978) outlines a theoretical model for curriculum negotiation which is further explored in The STC book. *Examples of how this process has been built into the curriculum are also described.*

BOOMER, G. — 'Negotiating the curriculum', in *English in Australia*, no. 44, June 1978, pp. 16-29.

This article sets out by asking the question 'How do children and, for that matter, we learn?', discusses the need to build learning theories and then poses the further question 'Are schools dedicated to the promotion of the child's power to learn and ultimately to learn independent of instruction and guidance?'.

As one strategy to raise the quality of learning and thinking in schools, Boomer offers a model that describes the process of negotiating the curriculum. This model is contrasted with a traditional curriculum model.

This article provides a very useful conceptual discussion of the need for, and process of, negotiating curriculum in schools.

REID, P. (ed) — *The STC book: the schools year twelve and tertiary entrance certificate* — Melbourne: Victorian Secondary Teacher's Association, 1981.

This booklet was written as an adjunct to the STC course description published by VISE. In a series of seven articles it examines such things as STC course construction, student participation, course approval, descriptive assessment and describes how a course may evolve and a course in practice.

It is stated in the booklet that:

'A decision to offer STC is not only a decision to offer an alternative to the Year 12 external examinations. It is also a commitment to a particular process of curriculum formation. This commitment involves schools in particular sorts of student/teacher relationships, particular attitudes to formulating objectives and content, a particular way of going about assessment and so on.'

This booklet concisely and constructively provides insights into the processes and approaches of the STC Course and although it refers to a Year 12 course the advice offered is relevant to curriculum development concerns throughout the school.

Approved study structure V: STC course: group 2 (85-12-082): higher school certificate course description — Melbourne: Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, 1981.

This course description embodies several features of a socially-critical orientation. The following quotes illustrate some of these.

'The various components of the STC Course, including the individual subjects, general meetings, work experience and visits to post-secondary institutions, must be seen by students and teachers to operate as a total program ... The unified nature of the STC Course is central to providing students with real experience of managing their own curricula.'

'The STC Group uses descriptive, non-competitive and on-going assessment as a component of curriculum...'

'Student participation is mandatory in the STC Course.'

'Negotiation is a preparation for the specific learning tasks and will include the need to establish justification of the program.'

The course description includes a history and background to the course, a course overview, an outline of the operation of the course and of the STC Group Council, and a rationale for the chosen assessment style.

Creative arts: group 2 (84-12-047): higher school certificate course description — Melbourne: Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, 1980.

The following excerpts from the course description indicate some of its salient features.

'This subject is designed as a "teaching/learning strategy" for Year 12 Art/Craft, rather than being content specific in nature. It consists of a "process" whereby students may engage in the practical, technical and appreciation aspects of the art/craft media of their choice ... Basically students will be required to negotiate and renegotiate where necessary, with their teacher, the broad terms of each project they undertake during the year.'

This course caters for a diversity of aspirations and ability, enables students to pursue activities through a diversity of media and provides the flexibility for students to renegotiate goals.

'The student is progressively given greater responsibility for the direction of his or her work.'

Student assessment, based on the student-maintained diary, is continuous, diagnostic (problems solved, problems unsolved) and participatory. The course booklet outlines the content of the course, appropriate teaching methods, assessment criteria and procedures and provides examples of work contracts, student projects and assessments. The intention throughout this course is to have students reflect on the **process** by which they produce, and in order to reflect, they must produce.

English B: group 2 (84-12-085): higher school certificate course description — Melbourne: Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, 1982.

This English course is referred to in the articles on 'goal-based' assessment by McRae (1981) and Hannan (1982) which are listed in the next section. The booklet outlines the course's rationale, rules, organising strategies, units of work and assessment procedures. This course is an excellent example of a curriculum designed to maximise student participation in setting goals and of goal-based assessment techniques.

As well as seeking to improve language skills the course also aims, amongst other things, to 'introduce a range of ideas and issues to the student which are relevant to the development of a thoughtful critical perspective', to demand maximum student engagement in the content and process of the course and to 'foster co-operative learning'.

The course has a compulsory writing unit and students must select two out of three other units, these units being Literature, Language and Production. The processes described on this course are applicable to courses below Year 12 and may well be transferable to other school based areas of study.

Other examples, by McRae (1981) and Turner (1982), of curriculum designed to incorporate principles of student negotiation are provided in the next section.

2. Non-competitive descriptive assessment

A valuable review of assessment methods and an introduction to the concept of 'goal-based' assessment is provided by Hannan (1981, 1982). Blachford (1981) explores some implications of competitive assessment research and the Curriculum and Assessment Branch of VISE (1981) offers some guidelines for improving assessment and reporting techniques in their paper. The practical application of goal-based assessment criteria to particular subjects is described by McRae (1981) and Turner (1982).

HANNAN, B. — 'Goals should always be attainable', in *The secondary teacher*, no. 2, 1981, pp. 13-19 and *TTUV news*, vol. 15, no. 1, 20 February, 1981, pp. 13-19.

This article introduces the concepts of goal-based or democratic assessment. In doing this it examines the historical development of assessment methods and offers perspectives on the related issues of streaming, ability and teaching content. When reviewing the concepts of 'new' assessment methods (ie non-competitive, non-graded, descriptive and satisfactory completion) Hannan argues that

> 'the concepts we have evolved are sound enough as far as they go, but we have to take them further before we have a clear-cut democratic alternative to old-style assessment'.

The step forward proposed is goal-based assessment and the process and concepts of this method are described. The distinctions between assessment and evaluation ('Assessment is an estimate of work actually done, evaluation is an estimate of the value of the work') are explored as is the role of reporting in schools.

This is a challenging and timely article that offers new insights into methods of assessing. Applications of the goal-based concepts are explored in some of the other writings described in this section.

HANNAN, B. — 'Assessment: a workable democratic method', in *English in Australia*, no. 59, March 1982, pp. 11-19.

In this article Hannan argues that for a democratic school system it is important to search for a workable, democratic method of assessment. He argues that

> 'a democratic assessment ought to result from a very clear understanding on everyone's part of what has to be done to obtain a satisfactory assessment. To achieve clarity, we really have to lay the ground for assessment from the very beginning. We have to make assessment part of the teaching process.'

Drawing on the example of the Year 12 English B course assessment procedures, Hannan illustrates how goal-based assessment can be applied in practice. Throughout the article distinctions between assessment and evaluation are made, as are distinctions between competitive assessment, descriptive assessment and goal-based assessment.

BLACHFORD, K. — 'To "B" or not to "B": competitive assessment and some options: a research review', in *The secondary teacher*, vol. 32, no. 8, October 1981, pp. 18-20.

This article examines two questions: does competitive assessment actually perform the function it seeks to perform and are there unintended effects of competitive assessment? It concludes a review of the literature on competitive assessment with the observation that such assessment techniques in schools 'are neither accurate, nor relevant nor fair'.

BORTHWICK, A. — 'The tyranny of evaluation: is there a role for the student?' in *English in Australia*, no. 59, March 1982, pp. 26-30.

This article illustrates the confusion that students have about what constitutes learning and how learning is judged by teachers. A series of stages are proposed (eg becoming explicit about criteria; giving students a shared role in applying criteria) that would lay the ground work for teachers and students developing a collaborative approach to defining and applying evaluative criteria.

Discussion paper on guidelines for descriptive assessments: a report from the Advisory Committee on School-Based Curriculum Development — Melbourne: Curriculum and Assessment Branch, Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, 1981.

This discussion paper outlines a rationale for descriptive assessments, provides guidelines for descriptive assessment reports and includes a series of annotated sample descriptive assessment reports.

McRAE, D. — 'The annotated and less than mysterious case of young Pat Hogan', in *The secondary teacher*, vol. 32, no. 8, October 1981, pp. 11-14.

Drawing on the example of the VISE accredited Group 2 English B Course, this article describes how goal-based assessment can be applied to a senior English course. It describes both the principles and processes of assessment and provides samples of certification (ie descriptive assessment) consistent with goal-based assessment. A table contrasting characteristics of 'traditional', 'distance travelled' and 'democratic' goal-based assessments concludes the article.

TURNER, R. — 'Goal-based assessment applied to maths', in *The secondary teacher*, vol. 33, no. 4, May 1982, pp. 14, 16 and 24.

This article describes the application of the principles of goal-based assessment to a mathematics course run at Sydney Road Community School.

Other examples of the application of non-competitive descriptive assessment can be found in the STC book, Approved study structure V and English B referred to in the previous section on the negotiated curriculum.

3. Mixed ability grouping

Clifford (1982) reviews some of the research on the effects of streaming, setting and tracking. This theme is further developed by Stainsby (1982) in her article, and Brennan and Hyde (1980) suggest 'new roles' for teachers usually expected to take the 'bottom stream'. The other articles suggest strategies for teaching mixed ability groups and/or describe the practices of teachers who teach mixed ability classes.

CLIFFORD, A. — "Streaming", in the section 'The how and why of teaching "mixed" abilities', in *The secondary teacher*, vol. 33, no. 5, July 1982, pp. 7-9.

In this article the author establishes some definitions of streaming, setting and tracking, recapitulates some of the research reports, some recent findings about streaming in Victorian technical schools and draws the conclusion that streaming increases the propensity of the school system and the social class structure to be mutually reinforcing.

STAINSBY, J.J. — 'Cross ability teaching is excellent teaching', in *Idiom*, vol. 17, no. 1, Summer 1982, pp. 2-9.

> 'Cross-ability teaching is the readiness to accept a non-graded group of students into your classroom. It is based on the strong democratic belief that no student should, during his [or her] period of compulsory education, be labelled according to his perceived ability at a given time'.

This article argues that a commitment to cross-ability teaching means a rejection of ability streaming, individualised programs, English as a second language and remediation by withdrawal.

It seeks to answer such questions as 'what are the implications of cross-ability teaching?' 'is it practical?' 'is it relevant to education?' and so forth.

BRENNAN, M. and HYDE, M. — *New and used roles for resource teachers* — Melbourne: Curriculum Services Unit, Education Department of Victoria, 1980.

This handbook suggests a wide range of roles that could be performed by resource teachers. This title is used in preference to the usual title of 'remedial teachers', since the latter often prescribes a narrow function within a school. The notion of the resource teacher shifts the emphasis away from 'band-aid' teaching to that of resourcing teachers so that they are better able to cope with any 'remedial' students they may have within their classes.

> 'We would suggest that the remediation approach, with all its diverse and even conflicting demands, cannot be expected to succeed, because it is treating the symptom rather than the cause.'

The handbook is a 'collection of ideas' that greatly extend the support role of resource teachers in schools.

VICTORIA. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. SECONDARY GEOGRAPHY COMMITTEE — *Strategies in geography for the mixed ability classroom* and *Strategies in geography for the mixed ability classroom: resource material* — Melbourne: 1982

These papers discuss strategies that geography teachers could apply when catering for the needs of individuals within mixed ability classrooms.

Although limited in their conceptualisation the booklets do offer a wide range of concrete suggestions for classroom practice.

RYAN, P., and others — 'What I do ... teachers are their own best theorists' in *The secondary teacher*, vol. 33, no. 6, August 1982 and *TTAV news*, vol. 16, no. 5, August 1982, pp. 6-17.

Several classroom teachers have contributed articles on their teaching practices within unstreamed, non-competitive classes. Teachers describe how they cater for mixed-ability classes in mathematics, science and English. A checklist for mixed-ability teaching concludes the descriptions of teaching practices.

The booklet by Campbell and Colley (1981), described in section 8 'School organisation', is also critical of the practice of withdrawing 'disturbed or disturbing children' from normal classrooms.

4. Parent participation in schools

Beacham and Thorpe (1980) outline the case for parent participation in schools and Beacham and Hoadley provide strategies designed to accomplish this objective. Hannan and Spinoso (1982) describe the methodology and results of their research into parental opinions in Brunswick.

BEACHAM, J. and THORPE, C. — *Dear teacher: a discussion paper prepared for the Disadvantaged Schools Program* — Canberra: Schools Commission, 1980.

This small booklet written in the form of a letter from a parent to a teacher challenges some myths (that parents are apathetic and conservative and that teachers know best), makes a plea for teachers to value all children equally, advocates equality of opportunity for all children and lists some 'do's' and 'don'ts' about working with parents and children in schools.

It indicates that the last thing teachers can afford is to be fighting both the system and parents when both parents and teachers should be 'fighting for a system which respects people's rights and creative intelligence rather than pecking orders, authority and oppression.'

This is a forthright publication that strongly advocates teacher/parent partnerships in schools.

BEACHAM, J. and HOADLEY, R. — *Techniques for participation in decision-making for previously uninvolved groups* — Published by the School Community Interaction Trust, 2 Blanche Court, East Doncaster, Victoria 3109.

This is an excellent publication that explores ways of assisting parent participation in schools. It maps out the kind of school climate that is most conducive to parental participation, distinguishes between the concepts of involvement and participation and offers practical advice about 'how to get started' and the process of having parents participating in schools. It also advocates student participation in school decision-making processes and raises questions about the nature and level of student participation in schools.

'As parents we are asking that our children be prepared for the twenty-first century. If we and our children are going to move towards a just and sustainable world we, with them, must learn how to co-operate, share skills and resources, and resolve conflicts creatively, and make hard decisions. Participation is not an option — it is a necessity.'

HANNAN, W. and SPINOSO, G. — *A mediterranean view of school* — Melbourne: Hodja Press in collaboration with the Brunswick Secondary Education Council, 1982.

This book is an account of research carried out in Brunswick to ascertain parent views about secondary schooling. It contains details of the survey questionnaire and interview questions and responses. These responses are analysed and provide an insightful record of the perceptions and concerns of the parents of Brunswick school-children and the extent to which their views agree or disagree with those held by the schools.

'No matter how we look at our information, the similarities among the various language groups are strikingly more numerous and significant than the differences . . . and gives rise to the notion that we are dealing as much with a working class view as with a Mediterranean view of schooling.'

This book illustrates a process for starting to consider parental concerns and also describes a number of principles to be adopted when pursuing discussions with parents about their views and concerns.

5. Youth participation — youth action programs

In this section the articles by Cole (1981, 1982), Knight (1980a, 1980b) and White (1982) provide a rationale for youth participation and youth action programs in schools and indicate a range of possible programs. Holdsworth's publication Connect, *contains descriptions of various youth participation programs and fulfills a valuable network building function. Cumming (1981) includes descriptions of youth participation workshops and the publication by 10E of Albert Park High School is a product of youth participation.*

COLE, P. — *Youth participation projects: a rationale for and guide to youth participation projects* — Melbourne: Advisory Services and Guidance Branch, Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, 1981 (Occasional paper; no. 3) (Free on written request from Publication Sales, VISE, 582 St Kilda Road, Melbourne 3004).

This paper outlines a rationale for youth participation in the development of the curricula and in the community, lists a series of program elements or statements and then briefly documents a wide range of youth participation projects in schools. These project examples include a description of the purpose of the project, the benefits to youth, possible sponsors and the names and addresses of people to contact for further advice. This is a useful booklet for introducing teachers to the concept of youth participation and for those wishing to connect with teachers who are running projects.

COLE, P. — 'Youth participation projects: possibilities and limitations', (Part 1) in *AdVISE*, no. 29, May 1982, pp. 2-4 and (Part 2) in *AdVISE*, no. 30, June 1982, p. 6.

These two articles explore some of the rationales advanced in support of the notions of providing 'new roles' for young people, offer some cautions about youth participation and, through the use of a chart, contrast characteristics of various 'youth oriented' programs in schools.

KNIGHT, T. — 'Why youth participation programs?', in *AdVISE*, no. 13, July 1980, *a*. pp. 1-2.

This article advocates youth participation programs as strategies for assisting alienated youth to feel wanted and useful and provides examples of such programs.

'In summary, what youth participation programs aim to achieve is to establish programs within and between school and community that have political and economic significance, to develop a sense of caring and sharing . . . and that the overall context provides for students a reason for learning . . .'

KNIGHT, T. — 'Youth in context: toward an understanding', in *AdVISE*, no. 16, October 1980, *b*. pp. 1-3.

In this article the position of youth in terms of contexts for social, political and economic participation is explored. Knight develops the premise that 'youth are different in 1980, because

our society is increasingly unable to legitimate its youth in a wide range of choices'. He advocates participation programs as one strategy for giving students access to roles that have meaning and a purpose.

WHITE, P. — 'Curriculum ownership: some implications for pedagogy', in *AdVISE*, no. 31, July 1982, pp. 1-2.

This article explores orientations to student control and the notion of a control continuum, custodialism being one extreme and humanism the other. Drawing on the program at Chandler High School, White discusses the concept of curriculum negotiation and advocates youth participation projects as a vehicle for extending student negotiation of the curriculum.

HOLDSWORTH, R. (ed.) — *Connect* (The newsletter of youth participation in education projects), 12 Brooke Street, Northcote 3070 (subscription rate $5.00 pa)

This bi-monthly publication is an extremely valuable vehicle for 'networking' teachers who are interested in youth participation projects in schools. It has a lively readership who regularly correspond about their projects. *Connect* also contains a listing of printed materials that are available for purchase.

KENT, G. — *Report on youth action programs within the Ballarat region* - Ballarat Transition Task Force, November 1980.

This report sketches the 'state of play' in twenty-seven secondary schools located within the Ballarat region with regard to youth action programs. It also includes a section titled 'Youth Action Program Manual' and outlines some of the projects that have been developed in Ballarat schools. A very valuable source for teachers.

MANSOUR, G. and others — 'Moreland high school: a student perspective', in *AdVISE*, no. 14, August 1980, pp. 1-2.

Students of the School-Work Program at Moreland High School describe their involvement in youth participation and youth action programs.

MARTINO, J. — '3-4-5 adds up', in *AdVISE*, no. 14, August 1980, pp.2-3.

A student of Sunshine High School's 3-4-5 Program describes the significance of being involved in school decision-making processes and the development of the sub-school's decision-making body, the teacher/student congress.

DEAN, R. — 'Art and the community: the Lalor high mural project', in *The secondary teacher*, no. 10, December 1981, pp. 28-29.

This article briefly explains the rationale behind producing a mural to commemorate the pioneers of Lalor. The task, carried out by a Year 10 class under the guidance of a mural artist and the teacher, helped students develop a greater understanding of their community and provided a link between the school and the community.

Educational innovations, vol. 6, no. 1, 1980 (Issue entitled 'The curriculum and local wisdom')

The short articles in this magazine describe a range of curriculum projects that provided students with co-operative, active learning experiences. Projects were focused around studies of freeways, building environments and sex roles, play production, work with the elderly and so on. A useful introduction to a range of activity-based curriculum projects in schools. The Kids Issue of this magazine (vol. 6, no. 3, 1982) also describes such things as student governance, students as tutors and provides extracts from student publications.

BROWN, L. — *St. Albans technical school community projects program* — Melbourne: Transition Education Advisory Committee, 1982. (Transition Education Case Study Project. Case study; no. 2)

This case study describes a program that sought to organise school resources to meet community needs, while at the same time teaching students about the local community and environment.

The underlying concepts of youth participation and community interaction are given practical application via a cross-age tutoring program, a parklands development program, a community music program, assisting with handicapped people, making toys for the local toy library, and other occasional projects and 'one-off' events.

This report describes such aspects as the strategies adopted when initiating and implementing the program, the role of the project workers, student views of the program and the effects of the program on students and the school.

The case study observes that 'It has been possible for the program to provide concrete examples of improvement through the adoption of an "interest-based" student-centred approach, and so to inform the debate which should shape the future organisation and curriculum of the school.'

REILLY, T. J. — *Moreland high school grounds reconstruction project* —Melbourne: (Transition Education Case Study Project, Case study; no. 1) Transition Education Advisory Committee, 1982.

This case study describes the development, implementation and effects of a program that involved students, teachers, parents and an architect in the design and reconstruction of school grounds.

> 'The Grounds Project has shown that structured and meaningful student participation produces positive changes on student behaviours and may have implications for student attitudes towards classroom work ... Student participation in the project has been facilitated by real power sharing and governance.'

This case study documents an imaginative and highly ambitious school-based project involving students, community experts and others. The project provided a socially useful and challenging curriculum activity that combined both a theoretical and practical component.

FIELD, J. and SULLIVAN, S. — *It isn't happening in Brunswick: a study of school leavers from an inner suburban area of Melbourne; a research project of the School-Work Program based at Moreland high school* — Coburg, Vic.: School-Work Program, 1981.

There were two aims achieved in developing this report. The first was that it successfully involved young people in gathering data about the circumstances of school leavers in Brunswick and the other was that it provided the Brunswick community with important and useful information.

Although the process of data collection is not the focus of this report, the report clearly illustrates the capacity of young people to produce socially useful information, and also documents the circumstances of Brunswick school leavers. It is a model of youth oriented research that could be adapted readily by other school communities.

BROWN, L. — *Sherbrooke EPUY* — Melbourne: Transition Education Advisory Committee, 1983 (forthcoming). (Transition Education Case Study Project Case study)

This is a detailed report of the Sherbrook EPUY program that seeks to illustrate the program's jobs centred approach to learning, its concern with the development of the whole person, and its strategies which pursue the development of survival skills and transferable work skills through action in the wider community. It also illustrates the potential that these programs have as a catalyst for community action.

The stimulating program description concludes with the following paragraph:

> 'Overall the program seems to be a significant test bed for ideas. The cutting edge of current educational thinking indicates that strategies of the type outlined when connected in this way have the potential to create a "socially-critical school". This program therefore seems to have a role to play in exploring the ideas of socially critical education in a community context'.

CUMMING, J. — *It will be alright on the day ... or will it?: a guide to planning in-service programs* — Melbourne: Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, 1981.

Using the example of the VISE organised Curriculum Development Conference (1981) this book both describes the process of in-service planning and reports on the conference proceedings.

The report consists of three sections: guidelines for in-service organisers, papers given at the VISE Curriculum Development Conference and summaries of conference workshops. Several

themes were adopted as a focus for workshop activities (eg community resources, theory and practice, transition, youth participation, special projects, evaluation/school review, and so on). The third section of the report describes the nature and outcomes of these workshops, indicates relevant readings and lists workshop leaders' names and telephone numbers.

The conference sought to assist teachers with the task of developing school-based curriculum and this report provides useful resources and starting points for curriculum review and development.

Move over teacher: a middle-level issues book for students by students written by students of 10E, Albert Park High School, Melbourne, edited by John Hill and Margaret Gorski — Melbourne: Australasian Educa Press, 1982.

This is a book of issues (school, smoking, gossip, hanging around, politics, growing up, and so forth) written and illustrated by the students of a Year 10 English class. By being involved in this process 'shy students started to demand a say; bad spellers started to hog the dictionary; people scared of the phone started to set up interviews ...'

6. Action research models

The concept of, and a process for, teachers reviewing their own practice are explored in the following articles.

McTAGGART, R., and others — *The action research planner* — Waurn Ponds, Vic: Deakin University Press, 1981. (rev. ed., 1982)

> 'The Action Research Planner is a procedural guide for teachers and administrators interested in improvement and change in the school. It provides a way of thinking systematically about what happens in the school and classroom, implementing action where improvements are thought to be possible, and monitoring and evaluating the effects of the action with a view to continuing the improvement.'
>
> 'Above all the Planner is designed for school communities themselves (teachers, parents, students, administrators and others) to manage the process of improvement.'

KEMMIS, S., and others — *The action research reader* — Waurn Ponds, Vic: Deakin University Press, 1981.

This collection of papers gives a historical overview of the development of action research, and then gives examples of action research by individual teachers, a group of teachers from a cluster of schools, a whole-school evaluation based on teacher research, and a major British action research project (The Ford Teaching Project). Through the examples and other papers, the collection makes clear what action research is about, **how** it is done, and **by and for whom**.

BRENNAN, M. and WILLIAMSON, P. — *Investigating learning in schools* — Melbourne: Curriculum Services Unit, Education Department of Victoria, 1981.

This is a guide to teacher investigations that are based on a cycle of activities - questioning, action, documentation, reflection. It describes techniques for gathering data, provides examples of three investigations and poses some questions pertinent to the process of teacher research.

BEASLEY, B. and RIORDAN, L. — 'The classroom teacher as researcher', in *English in Australia*, no. 55, March 1981, pp. 36-41.

This article explores the potential of research carried out by teachers in their classrooms and suggests some ways that teachers can go about collecting data. It is a brief and straight forward introduction to the notion of teachers as 'action-researchers'.

A further source of practical assistance in this area is provided by BROWN, L. — *Action research: the teacher as learner* — Melbourne: Curriculum Services Unit, Education Department of Victoria, 1981.

7. Non-sexist education

The reports by Dyson (1982) and Jones and others (1982) indicate the wide diversity of non-sexist education programs and strategies being explored in schools and communities. Blackburn (1982) raises some paramount philosophic questions and various other publications provide practical hints and strategies for equal opportunity project officers and for non-sexist teaching. Reilly (1982) describes in case study format an equal opportunities project in Brunswick.

DYSON, J. — 'Equal opportunity projects and the school to work transition program in Victoria in 1981', in *AdVISE* no. 27, March 1982, pp. 3-4 and *AdVISE*, no. 28, April 1982, pp. 2-3.

These articles document State and regionally funded TEAC programs focusing on the issue of equal opportunity for girls in school and the 'particular problems which girls have in making the transition from education to employment'. The projects of such groups as the Office of Women's Affairs, Equal Opportunity Unit, Education Department, Working Women's Centre, Winlaton Education Centre are described as are programs based in schools or Education Department regions.

JONES, A. and others — *A lucky dip of resources and ideas for non-sexist education: first report for 1982 of the Transition Education Girls' Project* — Melbourne: The Project, Equal Opportunity Unit of the Victorian Education Department, 1982.

This is the first of three 1982 reports and it aims to provide educators and other interested people with 'specific and detailed information on various programs, resources and ideas' that could be used in promoting non-sexist education.

The document describes in-service strategies for schools, information programs for parents, and indicates resources that deal with classroom practices such as building self-esteem, challenging sex-role stereotyping, widening girls' career choices and so forth.

This is a most useful document that suggests many avenues that teachers could explore when looking for practical advice about strategies for non-sexist education.

BLACKBURN, J. — 'Becoming equally human: girls and the secondary curriculum', in *VISE news*, no. 31, July/August 1982, pp. 16-22.

This paper argues that the terms in which the sexes are to be equalised 'ought to be such as would open up possibilities for a better life for men and children as well as for women'. Sex equality is regarded as an aspect, a fundamental aspect, of a 'more widely conceived curriculum reform'. Such a reform includes 'taking up a position about learnings, experiences and skills regarded as important for everyone on the basis of their common humanity and common citizenship' and making 'those learnings equally accessible to all over the compulsory years'.

TEAC equal opportunity project planner: suggestions for developing support systems in schools — Melbourne: Transition Education Advisory Committee, 1983.

This booklet aims to help equal opportunity project officers, teachers, committees and school administrations to promote the introduction of non-sexist education in schools. The advice in this booklet covers such things as administrative support, networking, working with teachers, students, parents and the community, debate and advocacy and also lists human and written and audio-visual resources.

STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF SEXISM — *The non-sexist teacher: practical hints* — Hobart: Tasmanian Teachers Federation (n.d.)

This booklet offers insights and advice on such questions as 'why be a non-sexist teacher?', 'is your school sexist?', 'what teaching methods are non-sexist?', and suggests how to get support for non-sexist ideas from staff, students and parents.

Although this booklet is written for Tasmanian teachers, the practical hints it contains are applicable to schools anywhere.

GRIMSLEY, A. — *Countering sexism: a growth program for adolescent boys* —Published with the assistance of a grant from the Innovations Program of the Schools Commission, 1979.

This booklet contains 'a programme of strategies and procedures designed to improve the inter-personal relating skills of adolescent boys while at the same time encouraging a critical awareness of the masculine stereotype within the context of a patriarchal society'.

It outlines the content and strategies of a series of lessons about sex-role stereotyping, sexism and boys and briefly evaluates the outcomes of the approach adopted.

Non-sexist teaching: some practical hints — Sydney: New South Wales Teachers Federation, 1981? (An amended version of a booklet originally produced by the Women's Advisor to the South Australian Institute of Teachers in 1979)

The contents of this booklet include discussions of teaching methods that encourage the development of non-sexist behaviour and strategies for combatting sexist materials and gaining support for non-sexist ideas; a large section is devoted to strategies for infusing non-sexist content into various subject areas. Extensive lists of teaching resources are included.

REILLY, T. — *BRUSEC equal opportunities project* — Melbourne: Transition Education Advisory Committee, 1982. (Transition Education Case Study Project. Case Study; no. 7)

This case study describes the project organisation and the role of the project officer, and comments on strategies for a school-based approach to equal opportunity (eg consciousness raising, curriculum development and staff development). It concludes that the achievements of the project were considerable and draws attention to the project's two-phase approach (ie counter-sexist initially and ultimately, non-sexist).

Other sources are: *Improving chances for girls: a strategy for confidence building*, Project Officer: Susan Monks, published by the Transition Education Unit, Education Department of South Australia (1981) and the booklet *Towards a non-sexist school: an action approach*, published by the NSW Department of Education (1981).

8. School organisation

This section broadly focuses on the kinds of organisational responses schools make in order to carry out their teaching task. Some of these responses result in organisational structures that should be rejected (Campbell and Colley 1981) and others that should be endorsed (Lovegrove and Parsons 1979 and Van Halen and Wyss 1982). A rationale for a sub-school or mini school is advanced by Lewers (1980).

CAMPBELL, T. and COLLEY, B. — *Special units and the secondary school: a discussion paper prepared for the Disadvantaged Schools Program* — Canberra: Schools Commission, 1981 (Discussion paper; 7)

This booklet highlights the shortcomings of 'special units' for disturbed or disturbing children (eg they take pressure off the school to reform, they identify the children as being at fault, they put severe pressure on individual teachers, they are an easy option for those trying to work out what to do with these students, and so on).

> 'We believe that the cop-out, soft option nature of special units and annexes will become apparent in what are now termed transition education programs. If we are right then these programs will generate "ghettos" within schools, allowing the schools to grind on relentlessly serving the needs of neither kids nor society.'

Some 'longterm objectives and strategies for tomorrow' related to changes in curriculum, teacher-student relationships and the organisation and administration of schools are described and explored.

LOVEGROVE, E. and PARSONS, R. A. — *Staff participation in decision-making: a study of ten Australian secondary schools* — Adelaide: South Australian Education Department, Directorate of Research and Planning, 1979.

This report is based on a study of the experiences of ten Australian secondary schools and it focusses on staff participation in decision-making. It describes the structures of ten schools and

how these facilitate a participative decision-making process. The report mainly describes the structures and processes of schools in South Australia, however, two Victorian schools, Thomastown High School and Huntingdale Technical School, are featured.

One of the conclusions of this report is that

'a participative system seems to have increased teachers' satisfaction and, we think, resulted in more effective decisions which concern the content and process of student learning and the quality of their education'.

An extensive bibliography of school-based decision-making and school organisation materials is also included.

VAN HALEN, B. and WYSS, U. — 'Alternative means different, not inferior', in *The secondary teacher*, no. 2, March 1982, pp. 24-25.

Two teachers from the Maribyrnong High School's Co-operative Course of Study, an alternative Year 11 course, describe their experiences. 'The way we treat our students is the way they will treat and react to society in adulthood. With most of our students we were able to ensure that they had as much power as each person could have.'

LEWERS, R. - 'Some advantages in being small', in *TTAV news*, no. 13, 1980, pp. 23-25.

This article describes the rationale and operations of Swinburne Community School:

'The principal value in choosing to have a small sized school is the potential then created to develop a distinctive educational philosophy within that school community which is both responsive and accountable to that same community.'

Other sources for discussion of the rationale behind sub-schools and small schools can be found in the next section (Freeman 1982 and Jones 1982 and others).

9. The adaptive school

This section describes schools (or groups of schools) that have substantially altered their organisation, student/teacher relationships, assessment policies and so forth in an effort to provide students of mixed-ability with relevant and challenging learning environments.

FREEMAN G. — *A small school in a state of change: the story of Sydney Road Community School, 1967 to 1982.* — Waurn Ponds, Vic: Deakin University Press, 1982.

This book describes clearly and sensitively the development of Sydney Road Community School. It details its struggles to be established and its attempts to implement democratic principles of organisation and teaching and to reconcile philosophic and practical contradictions. The book describes the growth of the school and its exploration of such vexed issues as teaching styles, student governance, relationships between schools and their local community, purposes of assessment, school-based curriculum development, collective decision-making, and so forth. Sydney Road Community School's contribution to educational debate has been remarkable and sustained.

'Sydney Road might have been set up in the first place by the bureaucracy as a way of shuffling off the "progressive activists" in an attempt to stifle them into self survival courses. Instead it has become an institution which not only serves the children of Brunswick remarkably well but serves as a laboratory of change for the education system as a whole.'

Those who know the education systems in other Australian States are often amazed at the high level of educational debate and the diversity of practices in Victoria as compared to elsewhere. Developments at Sydney Road have played a significant role in influencing curriculum directions in schools and this school has earned itself a prominent place in the history of progressive education in Victoria.

JONES D. and others — *Sunshine high school 1976-82: a school curriculum and self evaluation project* — Bundoora, Vic: Centre for the Study of Urban Education, La Trobe University, 1982 1982 (Task force team report; no. 7)

This report of the curriculum developments at Sunshine High School is to be applauded. It is an exciting and remarkable document. It describes one State secondary school's efforts to define a sense of purpose by setting goals and then reviewing its efforts, in order to develop a more defensible theory and practice.

The report is extremely valuable reading for all schools in that it articulates carefully and fully a forward-looking educational philosophy, describes the practice developed in response to that philosophy and indicates the outcomes of that practice.

> 'Sunshine High School is a study of what can be done. It is also a story of limitations to action. It tells us what cannot be done. Sunshine High School can prepare someone for the world of work, it cannot by itself create jobs. It can teach students to be concerned citizens, it cannot create a responsive government. It can teach multi-cultural respect, but it cannot prevent inequal treatment of minorities, women and youth in society.'

This extensive report details the changes in the school's structures and decision-making processes, the development of the school goals and the various strategies adopted to achieve the school's goals. It also indicates how the school's programs were evaluated and makes recommendations in light of this evaluation data.

WILSON, B. — *Expanding horizons: a case study* — Melbourne: Transition Education Advisory Committee, 1983 (forthcoming) (Transition Education Case Study Project Case study)

This report describes a TEAC-funded school-to-work program involving Chandler High School, Cobden Technical School and Eaglehawk Technical School. Although the authors are most impressed with the overall scheme adopted by the three schools and the report is concerned primarily with the three schools participating in the project, it does raise some particular issues of significance to all schools. These include questions about the degree of parent and student participation in curriculum decisions, the relationships between mental and manual skills, the position of 'special' programs within a school environment and the balance between technical and socio/political aspects of work.

This report of the curriculum activities of three schools attempting to develop meaningful alternative educational experiences for their students provides valuable insights into the process of curriculum development and review.

Appendix 2 — Three curriculum orientations: hypothetical interviews and profiles of transition initiatives

In the three sections which follow, some of the main ideas of each of the three curriculum orientations described in this report are presented through a fictional interview with an advocate of the orientation together with several profiles of transition initiatives compatible with the orientation. These profiles are composite descriptions, based on real programs operating in Victorian schools.

The vocational/neo-classical orientation

Hypothetical interview

May I ask you first about the meaning of the term 'curriculum'?

Certainly. The curriculum is a structured sequence of knowledge and forms of knowledge to be mastered by students. By following the course of the curriculum (you know, don't you, that the word curriculum comes from the Latin for a course, as in a chariot course — like a race-course, really) a student can be initiated into the forms of knowledge of our culture. I know some people find it a bit conservative these days, but I believe Hirst and Peters are right about the importance of forms of knowledge. Education is the means by which our society ensures that the young are able to enter its forms of life and its different forms of awareness. Of course, this must be done sensitively and critically, so that students may contribute in their turn to the productive work of our society, at every level, whether in the dignity of manual labour or in contributing to the arts, sciences and social policy-making.

What is the view of knowledge you take in thinking about the curriculum then?

I think I have already said something about that. Knowledge is justified true belief, tested in

characteristic ways in different disciplines, and proven in the activities of different trades and crafts. Some of the most important knowledge in our society — some would say the only true form of knowledge — is the empirically-verified knowledge of science. The success of our society is demonstrated in the achievements of science and technology. They have made it possible for man to master nature and to organise social life on the social principle of the greatest good for the greatest number. We are able, through science, to deliver goods and services which were unthinkable even a hundred years ago.

I see.

I should add that not everything worth knowing is science. There are also the arts and humanities. It is important for students to develop an appreciation of the arts, literature and crafts: apart from their value as leisure pursuits and for making things, the arts develop aesthetic sensibilities and appreciation. But their greatest value is their civilising influence — they introduce the young to a sense of culture and to what is worth preserving in our way of life.

What is your view of the student in relation to the curriculum, then?

I have already said something about that, too. The student comes to school with a background of ideas and skills picked up at home. But he comes to school to be prepared by specialists who understand the knowledge and skills needed in our society. Through the curriculum, the student acquires these knowledges and skills — or at least some of them. Too much is known today for anyone to even hope to master everything.

You spoke of the teacher as a 'specialist'. What is the specialism of the teacher?

Well, the teacher is a specialist in a number of ways, but I suppose in two ways most of all. First, the teacher is an authority. I mean that in the sense that he is an authority in some subject, some discipline. In the case of a primary school teacher, it may be authority in quite a broad range of subject-matters — a modest kind of authority. Second, the teacher is a specialist in teaching. That means he knows how to order and sequence knowledge so that it can be most effectively acquired by the students. The teacher prepares knowledge for the student. And also the teacher — the good teacher, and there are not enough of them these days — knows how to make learning palatable and rewarding for students. He knows how to motivate students. I know some people think of teachers as ogres, cramming students full of facts against their wills. That only ever happens in bad teaching.

To be a good teacher, one needs to know how to prepare the way of learning for the learner, and to prepare the learner for what is to be learned. I think the psychologist Piaget had something to say about that, but I am inclined to think it a bit woolly. I do know that psychological research of an empirical kind has been able to demonstrate a number of principles of learning that are easily applied by teachers: teaching by small steps, the power of reinforcement, and the like. I believe they work in practice.

What would you say about the relationship between students and teachers, then?

Well, it has to be based on respect. If the teacher is any good, he will have respect without having to impose it. But he should insist on it in the sense that the students should respect what he has to teach. The teacher must be in authority in the classroom because he is an authority in what is to be learned.

Could you say something about assessment in that context?

I don't really think of assessment as a relationship in the sense that I've just been talking about it, but the same general principles apply. The teacher is a representative of knowledge, of culture, you might say, and he has an authority vested in him in relation to what students know. He is the judge of what and how much students have learned. In a way, it is the very essence of the authority of the teacher from the viewpoint of society and our culture. The teacher must be able to certify what the student knows, in a manner of speaking. Later on in schooling, that certification is very real, in public examinations.

You said earlier that the teacher is a specialist in teaching. Could you say something about the organisation of the classroom?

Yes. I would like to say, by the way, that this is something about which many myths abound today. There are a lot of myths about 'open' relationships and 'informal' structures in classrooms which are meant to be for the good of students. But a lot of that is romantic nonsense. Classrooms should

be organised as places for learning, not for other psychological or social purposes. A lot of what passes for the organisation of learning is really a political or social matter: comprehensive schooling, mixed ability grouping and the like. Classrooms should be organised so students can learn in them most effectively. And since kids learn at different rates, have different abilities and so on, they should be grouped homogeneously so that teaching and learning can be most efficient and effective. Relationships in the classroom should have a certain formality to them — that is not to say that they have to be unfriendly or unpleasant. It is simply to say that they should do the job they were designed to do: to arrange things so that groups of students can acquire the knowledge and skills our culture has accumulated, and which they will need to participate productively in our society.

Maybe I should add, in this context, that the school has a clear role in preparing students for the real society they will meet when they leave school. A great deal of what passes for education today is actually political tampering with education. Preparing kids for a culture that they won't find when they leave school — either the romantic society that some of your more romantic liberals believe in, or the kind of communal society that some of the radicals seem to want, God forbid! —preparing kids for that kind of world is not in their interests. And that is where the duty of a teacher lies: a duty to the interests of kids as people (or people-to-be, if you like). Their interest will best be served by recognising their endowments early, by selecting them appropriately for the different kinds of educational opportunities available, and by preparing them efficiently to take advantage of the opportunities they may have in the society beyond school. And that, I would argue, is a realistic assessment of what schools can best do for kids.

Thanks. You've put that very clearly indeed. I take it then, that you believe that schools have important controlling functions?

That's a loaded question. There are a lot of people about today who take a very naive view about control. It is as if every exercise of authority was somehow improper or self-interested. I think it is enough to say that we can distinguish between duly-constituted authority and authority of other kinds. If you want me to say that teachers must be in control of classrooms, I will answer with a firm 'yes'. Classroom control is entirely compatible with the efficient transmission of knowledge and skills. And the authority of the teacher is duly-constituted: the teacher is trained, has access to the best and most recent products of science and the arts, and has a legal responsibility to make these available to students. The decisions a teacher takes are, and should be, open to independent, objective assessment by the authorities within the education system, and, ultimately, to society through Parliament. That is how democracy works in our society.

What about decision-making in the school as a whole?

Well, the same principles apply. The school is organised for the job of teaching; departments are arranged for the special circumstances of the teaching of their particular disciplines; the authority structure of the school reflects the principles of responsibility and authority of society at large. Good school decision-making is consultative, but it is also accountable. When decisions are made, it should be clear how and by whom they have been made so that it is possible to see that due process has been observed.

That says something about the arrangement of subjects in the school, too, doesn't it?

What do you mean?

Well, doesn't your position imply an arrangement of subjects by departments and the expertise of different teachers?

Yes it does. But I have already said that the authority of the school rests in the authority of teachers in their disciplines, and that good teaching requires getting subject matter across to kids efficiently and effectively. If you are asking what I think about child-centred curricula or projects, or interdisciplinary teaching, then I will say that I think that those things are all very well to interest and motivate students, and to give them experience in dealing with complex social and technical issues. But these things should not be mistaken for the primary task of schools in initiating students into the forms of thought and the practical requirements of our culture. Kids can't learn everything, so it is important to decide what they can do well, and to give them opportunities to develop their abilities appropriately. They can then go on to make the best of their individual talents in society.

This would have implications for the kind of spaces and resources needed by schools, wouldn't it?
Yes it does. Different disciplines require different resources, and to learn them you need different classroom arrangements. Science needs laboratories; technical subjects, workshops; art needs studios, and so on. But just because literature and language need discussion spaces doesn't mean that every subject should be taught in that kind of space. I think that's the big mistake of the 'open' education movement. It just doesn't comprehend that different spaces are appropriate to different kinds of learning.

To change the subject now, what is the role of parents in the curriculum?
This is another area where the distinctive role of the school as an institution in our society is being undermined. I suppose parents now are far better educated than they were. And some of the best educated think that they have a role in teaching and learning in schools. If they want that role, I don't know why they don't become teachers. Research shows that what parents most want to do in relation to schools is to support their own children's learning. They want to know what schools do so they can help their kids to do it well. That is the best role they can adopt, and it is the most supportive one from my perspective as a teacher. There are the odd few middle-class, vocal parents who get on to school councils and then want to dictate what schools should do. They are pretty rare, and they certainly don't represent the majority who want to let teachers get on with the job of educating their kids. They are the kinds of people — unfortunately they are aided and abetted by some teachers who want to take on any fashionable fad or issue in the curriculum — who are forcing schools to take on wider and wider social roles. If these pressures are sustained, and if these people have their way, schools will lose their distinctiveness altogether, and then they won't do their legitimate job properly, and society will be much the worse for it. Schools are not social welfare agencies, nor are they agencies of social reconstruction. Our society has other institutions and processes established for fulfilling those functions, and schools should not be pressed to take them on as well.

What about your view of society at large? Does that have any bearing on curriculum matters?
Yes. Those are pretty broad questions and I have really said all I need to about them. I am a realist. I can see that society has a structure, and that schools should prepare kids for participating in it in their turn. It is certainly not the school's job to challenge the structures of our society. We have political institutions whose proper function that is. And teachers are servants of the State; they are not entitled by their jobs to challenge it.

Society is hard. It is not always right. But in a democratic society, we must abide by the proper processes. That is why they are there, and we only have a democracy if we hold on to those processes firmly.

And the society outside the school is hard on kids when they go out into it as adults, taking their places in the work-force and so on. I don't like that. I don't like its brutality. I don't much like the toughness of the competititon kids have to face today. But pretending it isn't there won't help them, and in the end it won't help us. We can improve this society by making it more humane and more caring. Good teachers make learning possible and palatable; a good society makes life possible and palatable for its citizens. If schools help to create that humanistic outlook in kids, and if they create good citizens, then in the long term society will improve by itself, if that is necessary. We need to get the best people into the best positions to defend and to improve our society. I'm not always sure that we have — in fact, I'm sure that we haven't. In the next few decades, technological change will completely change the society we know today. If we don't have the best and brightest of our people in there as our leaders, life may become unbearable for many. You could say that schools have greater responsibilities than ever before — there is more to know, more to protect in our advanced society. But I will say that the responsibilities of schools are the same as ever — to prepare kids for participation in society by initiating them into the knowledge and skills of our culture. If we do that job well, we can be satisfied.

Thanks very much for talking to me.
Thank you.

Profiles of transition initiatives

1. A work experience program with a vocational/neo-classical orientation

teacher role directive; minimal student decision-making

The careers teacher selects Year 10/11 students for work experience. Allocation to work sites is by the teacher who takes account of student interests.

Each student spends one week with a local employer. While students are in their placements they are treated as 'new employees'. The careers teacher visits them during the placement to see how things are going.

school-directed relationships with wider community

teacher operates independently of other staff as expert

The careers teacher is responsible for identifying employers to participate in the scheme, for maintaining contacts, for allocating students, for informing parents and other staff about the program, and for general program administration.

program viewed as subordinate to main curriculum

The program operates outside the regular curriculum: students are required to catch up on work missed when they return to class after the work experience week.

Before students go out on work experience they are individually briefed by the careers teacher. During the week, they are expected to clarify their views about the particular occupation and career choice. Through the week, it is expected that students will be introduced to a range of activities undertaken by people in the occupation. They will be set specific tasks to complete which are within their current competence but related to regular work within the occupation.

main orientation to work skills and specific job information

competitive assessment based on employability criteria

At the end of the week, the employer completes an assessment form, assessing the student's employability by reference to a set of criteria. These assessments will be used by the careers teacher in preparing comments on work experience performance for school reports.

Parents must give assent to the involvement of their children in the program. They may also be approached to become involved in the program as employers.

parents as non-professional support, for program administration

reflective activities are brief, related to specific employment issues

Students keep a diary and/or complete a questionnaire during the work experience week. This is used as a basis for a debriefing session with the careers teacher and/or for class discussion in a 'careers' class.

2. A career education program with a vocational/neo-classical orientation

The program incorporates some individual student counselling focused on vocational aspirations and course selection implications within and beyond school.

vocational information unrelated to other knowledge areas under study →

A careers library provides an informational resource for students. Careers classes are timetabled. All activities are directed towards matching individuals with appropriate career choices. Classes often emphasise job acquisition and retention skills.

← *society viewed as essentially static; students to fit existing social conditions*

career education curriculum distinct, separate and of lower status than other curriculum areas →

The careers teacher is responsible for career education as a separate subject. Careers education is treated as a subject faculty in financial and timetabling terms by the school administration. A separate and attractive room is provided for counselling and the careers library. The careers teacher often has considerable independence of function by comparison with other teachers in the school.

← *teacher as independent expert*

The organisation of the program is based on improving the match between the nature and type of occupational choices and the identifiable personality, aptitude, interests and values of individual students. Programs often reflect psychological theories of vocational selection.

← *static view of society*

non-assessment reflects school priority on career education →

Formal assessment of students occurs rarely if ever in the program. Performance in the program is unlikely to form part of regular school assessment activities. Some program evaluation may be undertaken, usually based on informal feedback from school leavers and their perceptions of the program. Follow-up information may also be used with students currently in the program.

parents involved as information sources, mostly not involved →

Parents may provide additional career information from their own experience: they may also be a target audience for information at career nights or seminars organised by the careers teacher.

The student is the consumer of information available in careers classes and the career library. Informational excursions may supplement class and library work. A work experience program provides opportunities for some experience-based learning.

← *static or passive student role*

← *formal classroom organisation with some humane environmental elements*

3. A youth participation program with a vocational/neo-classical orientation

ability grouping → The program is designed for 'at-risk' students who experience difficulty learning through existing curriculum provision, and is usually a 'terminal' program from which students will have difficulty re-entering the regular school curriculum. It provides an alternative to the regular curriculum for these students. The program is developed and implemented on the basis of the interests of an individual staff member or a small group of staff, and focuses on topics which will be perceived as 'relevant' by students. Through participation in the program, it is hoped that students will improve their competitive position in the teenage labour market.

separate from mainstream curriculum; students segregated into terminal stream

← *program-based on teacher interests*

← *social structure treated as given; students fitted to labour market*

program treated as separate subject → The program is usually timetabled at the upper part of the middle school curriculum, usually at Year 10 but sometimes at Year 11. It is offered as a separate subject, replacing regular provision in some subject areas. Students work for more extended periods of time with fewer staff members. The program is controlled and operated by the teachers involved.

← *teacher in directive role*

The emphasis of the program is on production — students seeing their work as product-oriented. Newspapers, mini-farms and radio programs are typical 'products'. These involve a wider variety of learning methods than regular subjects.

Teachers control student work in the program, organising students in activities. Links between the learning activities of the program and general intellectual development are maintained through assignments and competitive grading.

competitive assessment →

Parents usually decide whether their children should be involved in the alternative program; teachers will advise and recommend on participation. After approval is given, parental involvement usually ceases.

← *parents as clients*

The liberal/progressive orientation

Hypothetical interview

May I ask you first of all to define curriculum?

I don't know if I can define it to your satisfaction, but I can tell you what I mean by it. I mean 'the experiences of the child, both arranged and accidental, through which learning occurs and through which subsequent experience is organised'. I cannot distinguish between the curriculum and the development of the child, at least not in any important sense. And I see development as very important, not only for children, but also for adults, and even whole societies.

You mentioned 'experience'. Is this an important idea in relation to your view of knowledge? That would be important to take into account in curriculum, wouldn't it?
That's a good question. How do you think it relates?

Well, it obviously means something about knowledge in the head being related to a base in experience, and that suggests that the curriculum might be a course of unfolding of experience. The derivation of the word 'curriculum' apparently relates to the Latin for chariot race-courses. Anyway, I'm meant to be giving you a chance to put your views: what do you think about knowledge?
In a way, my question put my view. What I mean is rooted in my experience, what you mean will be rooted in yours. As we talk to each other, we can develop our own views as they come up against new aspects, new dimensions. What we write down as a definition can be helpful for establishing starting-points, but we will develop it through our experience.

That chariot-course idea is not very helpful, I think. I don't dispute its origin; it's just that the idea of curriculum has developed a good deal since the term came into general use in education (in the eighteenth century, I think). If knowledge is in people — as accomplishments, learnings, attitudes and living skills which have significance only in relation to the contexts of our lives —then we do not want to be too hasty in putting it into established grooves or constraining its development on the basis of external factors like what books can tell us (though we will want to take what books can tell us into account when we put learning opportunities in the way of students).

My view of knowledge is very much based in Piaget, Montessori, Herbart, Dewey — those people. They convince me that knowing is growing, and that our ideas and our culture develop as we explore problems and issues in action and communication.

You are already beginning to say something about the role of the learner, aren't you? That is my next question.
You really want me to run your course, don't you! Well, I'll try.

Yes my view of knowledge does have something to say about the role of the learner. The learner only grows by acting in and on the world, and by interpreting experience for him or herself. So the learner has to be active. The learner has to **put** shapes on his or her experience; even if we suggest **our** shapes, they will only be understood by the learner to the extent that his or her shaping of experience coincides with ours. Students **make** sense of things, they don't **accept** the sense or significance we give things, unless they see for themselves what we mean.

Our job as teachers is to create opportunities for kids to do what they do naturally — to learn. We need only put the opportunity in their way, find profitable tracks for them to follow (I mean 'tracks' there in the sense of trails to be blazed, not the well-worn paths of others, like your chariot courses — what could be more boring than an oval race-track?). No — we have to help children find lines of exploration that they can pursue on their own. Naturally, we need to help them find lines of enquiry that will allow them to relate to one another and to others around them. By the mid-nineteen-twenties, the progressives were already aware that a purely child-centred curriculum wouldn't lead to social reciprocity and mutual understanding. Child-centredness is a principle about learning, not an answer to all the problems of education.

The world is out there for the child to explore. It has ideas in it, and opportunities for learning. It is something for the child to come to grips with, and, as I said, to make sense of. In the classroom, we try to make it possible for the child to take advantage of those opportunities to understand.

What is the teacher's role then?
To allow that to happen. To arrange things so that kids can make sense of the world. To facilitate those learning processes and, most importantly, to keep alive that spirit of enquiry so that kids can grow into adults interested in exploring and understanding their world, not taking it for granted.

What does that mean for the relationship between students and teachers?
The relationship is very important. The American philosopher of education Harry Broudy talks about 'philetics' — the love of the teacher for the learner. Now that is emphatically **not** anything sloppy, sentimental, romantic or 'touchy-feely', though lots of critics of progressive education mistakenly think it is. What the teacher is loving in the learner is his or her learning and

experiencing. That isn't something blind or romantic. It means that the teacher has to value the child and the child's development, not put his or her own definitions and preferences in the way of the child's own understandings. Only if that kind of relationship exists will the child learn to make sense of the world and develop confidence in making sense. Otherwise, the child will simply be dominated and made submissive to other people's views of the world.

So one implication of your view is that the teacher has to respect the learner?

Yes. Some teachers think the only kind of respect relevant in education is the student's respect for the teacher. That kind of respect too easily begins as awe of adults (powerful mother- and father-figures) and ends as authoritarianism. I believe that respect is a two-way thing. If you respect kids and their views and their problems (and you needn't do it uncritically, though you must always treat your differences from their points of view sensitively), then they will respect you. They will see that you can share goals and concerns with them, and work together with them.

But what about assessment? When the teacher has that kind of power over the student, doesn't that unmask the respect you speak of as only a superficial kind of respect? Isn't the real power of the teacher over the student revealed in assessment?

I take your point. But I think you are running ahead of what I have actually said. What do you think assessment means in the progressive school?

Now you're asking the questions again! Well, I suppose that the progressive teacher has to make assessment secondary to some other principle.

Absolutely. What kind of principle?

I suppose it must be something to do with experience and confidence-building and so on.

Pretty close! Yes, the progressive teacher sees assessment in relation to learning, as part of the act of learning and part of the on-going process of learning. If you suddenly step out of the learning process and say 'and now I will assess you and tell you whether what you think is right', then you have violated the principle of child-centredness. It's what the student understands that's important, and that means 'what the student understands about his or her own learning'. From this, it follows that kids have to have a role in assessment, in evaluating their own learning, and learning something about their learning processes from their evaluations.

The progressive teacher uses self-assessment, peer assessment and negotiated assessment (teacher and student together placing a value on what has been learned). Often the teacher will use descriptive assessment, writing about the child's work in a way which describes what has been done — a bit like the art critic creating the language by which a work of art may be understood, and creating a reputation for it. A description of what has been learned can help the child to understand and use what has been said in subsequent learning. Assessment is a very important part of the learning process; if it's not done in accordance with the basic principle of respecting the child's experience, then the teacher is not progressive or child-centred at all. It is just a masquerade — and unfortunately, it happens too often among teachers who don't understand what progressive education is about, and in the end want to impose their values and understandings on their kids.

All right. Let's move on to classroom organisation. What is your view of that in relation to the curriculum?

Let me see ... One way to say it would be to sloganise it: learning is often thought of as work, but I would say that the child's work is play. That means that we need to organise classrooms as if for play. The child's play is the most serious kind of work: learning. The classroom has to be organised for kids to explore: there must be opportunities for the kids to pursue their own learning projects. There must be opportunities for activity. The activity opportunities need to take account of the kids' own backgrounds of experience and learning, and build on them developmentally. This means that classrooms are going to be slightly untidy places; whole schools will be slightly untidy. They need to be creating opportunities for kids to explore their world, and have resources of all kinds available for them to do so.

Some people think that all the resource spaces can be kept neatly separate, that different subjects can use different spaces, organising them just in terms of what their subjects need. But those subjects aren't the **kids'** subjects, they're the **teachers'**. I'm afraid that tidy minds (teachers' tidy minds, that is) and kids' learning don't go together. Kids need to make sense of their world, and to have the opportunity to put their shapes on what is to be learned. So we need to organise the

resources of the classroom and the school to respond to the kinds of projects that kids can undertake. After a while, we begin to see that we can make some shrewd guesses about the kinds of things that kids will want to explore at different ages (chemistry sets and simple electronics for young adolescent boys, for example), but we don't have to push them into those things.

A. S. Neill could run the whole of Summerhill school on the principle that the kids only ever did anything voluntarily. It can be done. Classroom and school organisation have to be responsive to the concerns of learners, not the 'requirements' of subjects or teachers. When you get that the wrong way around, you turn schools into information factories — and what's more, you kill off the desire to learn in all but a few for whom academic knowledge in tidy subject-compartments is the most appropriate way to learn. Kids like that are sad to me — they're terribly conforming, docile and submissive. They learned early to be what other people wanted them to be, and they have a very hard time coming out, finding themselves, developing confidence in their own capacities to create and think things through. There are plenty of people who go through the whole education system like that, and end up mistaking authority for confidence, the power of the bully for the power to create and contribute. Whole civilisations seem to run on those principles, you know ...

I seem to have started you off on something bigger than curriculum ...

On the contrary. The problems of curriculum are far bigger than the problems of the school. Schools aren't islands.

Well perhaps you could say something about parents in this connection.

Parents are important. They provide support for their kids, and, in the best school communities, they can support the school in all kinds of ways just by supporting kids in their learning. Not all parents find it easy to live by the principles of the child-centred school, you know. Many parents are not child-centred: they are at odds with their kids; their kids threaten their own self-interests (the parents' self-interests, that is). We can't do much about that, though we can try to educate our parents. The school should stand by its principles, though: its principles are based on learning, and that's what schools are for. Not everyone recognises that whole societies can be about learning too.

Well say something about society. What is it like and what should it be like?

Our society is good, but it is not great. There are many injustices that need to be righted. The school has a role in helping to right those injustices, partly by keeping ideals alive, and by developing the confidence of children in thinking through the complex social issues of the day. The school prepares kids for a society that is not the society of the present — it is one that they will meet in a few years when they leave, and also one that they will make when they come to take the leadership roles in it. We need to prepare them for something beyond the present — a better world. And they will have to make it better. So schools have a special responsibility to educate kids in the best values and understandings of which they are able, and to work through difficult problems constructively. The school has a role in reconstructing society.

I would like to add just one thing more, if I may. I see the school as preparing citizens with the capacity to make the world better for their having lived in it. We must help our students to become the kind of people who will use the talents and attainments they possess, and the democratic structure of our society, to make the world a better place.

Thank you.

Thank you for listening ...

Profiles of transition initiatives

1. A work experience program with a liberal-progressive orientation

some integration into mainstream curriculum

The program is embedded in the existing curriculum. It is usually at Year 10 or 11, and lasts for two or three weeks altogether, often in three separate weeks spaced throughout the year. Students' activities on work experience are linked to subject content in other subjects, often by specific assignments or activity sheets. For example, job roles and institutional sociology may be the focus of assignments in specific work experience settings, and these may be taken up in a sociology or social studies course.

activity-based, not information-based

though within a subject orientation, knowledge developed individually by students through experience

teacher prepares learning opportunities

The program is administered by the teacher with assistance from the careers teacher and other teachers in relation to employer contacts, assignment preparation and information dissemination. Procedures for students missing work while on work experience are negotiated at faculty level by the work experience coordinator.

cooperation between faculties

emphasis on individually-directed knowledge-seeking

Work experience is seen as a practical extension of classroom learning; it may be related to specifics of occupational choices for students but activities will often be exploring topics of general significance about work; and classroom work will stress preparation for work-experience over a number of weeks and in relation to a variety of topics. Classroom discussions, individual research and individual report-writing extend understanding of work and the workforce.

teacher administers program but aims to engage individual interests

assessments informal, integrated with other subjects

Self-assessment and peer assessment precede teacher descriptive assessment of work completed; some of these assessments will be part of the regular assessment of other subjects.

Parents help extend the range of employer contacts and give approval for the participation by the children.

parents as non-professional support

emphasis on reflective analysis

Students complete a diary of the experience as well as assignments on specific aspects of work. Work experience is an opportunity for researching these topics. Class discussions share individual learnings and assist students not only in choosing occupations but also

aim of self-understanding

in understanding the nature of work. On this basis, students are helped to formulate and evaluate their criteria for choosing careers.

2. A youth participation program with a liberal-progressive orientation

individualistic perspective on learning and the learner

Programs are developed within the context of existing teaching areas — usually subjects. Programs encourage individual research and practical activities, perhaps in the community or within the school, which build on theoretical aspects of knowledge pertinent to that subject. A high degree of flexibility in activities undertaken by each student is encouraged within the framework of the area of knowledge under examination.

weak boundaries between subjects

Generally the framework for activities and the organisational requirements — negotiating time with other teachers, arranging contacts, introducing students to out of school personnel — is undertaken by the subject teacher as a facilitator of individual learning. Additionally, overall program timelines and requirements for successful completion of the activity will be arranged in the main by the subject teacher, often in consultation with the students.

teacher as facilitator of individual learning

consultation with students; teacher as mentor yielding control

All activities are intended to assist students achieve a thorough understanding of a particular area of knowledge/concepts/cultural perspective. A range of methods are expected to be initiated by the students using the teacher as an organiser/co-ordinator/facilitator. For example, individual students may be involved in field research, literature surveys, practical experience, or community assistance activities. These activities all focus on an area of knowledge under study. For example, the historical development of a local area, or the influence of 19th century English writers in contemporary Australian literature.

reconstructionist perspective on community

knowledge depends on student construction

The student is actively involved in the design and implementation of projects. A combination of passive and active learning modes occurs. The student has the capacity for decision-making in regard to some of the methods he/she will utilise to clarify an understanding of an area of knowledge. In general, students do not have significant decision-making in regard to the requirements for satisfactory completion.

some student decision-making

descriptive assessment focusing on quality of learning

Formal assessment is undertaken by the teacher following student self-assessment and peer assessment. The focus of assessment is on the quality of work emanating from students, together with some observations of overall personal development associated with the degree of initiative shown by students in pursuing their study. Assessment will combine a graded format and descriptive modes to profile student performance.

emphasis on personal development

consultation with parents

Parents may be contacted to assist in co-ordinating and opening opportunities for students who wish to follow approaches out of the school — in industry, commerce or the community. Close contact with individual parents will occur when specific difficulties for some students are identified by the teacher.

The socially-critical orientation

Hypothetical interview

What do you mean by the term 'curriculum'?

The curriculum is a concrete historical thing. It is embodied in the structures and processes and tasks of a school. The work of the school carries messages for students both explicitly and implicitly — it is important for the school to flush the implicit messages of the hidden curriculum into the open so that students, parents, the community and teachers can exercise some control over the real curriculum of the school.

The curriculum takes place in a real community context — it must relate to the life and work of the community in explicit ways. It engages the real experience of real kids — it must be explicit about how it picks up their interests and how it influences them. And it takes place in a real historical period — it must help kids to locate themselves in history and relate the things they learn about to their historical origins. All of this means that the curriculum helps kids to see themselves as products of a culture and a society and influencing that culture and society through their actions. It has to give kids a critical perspective on society and themselves.

If all that sounds a bit abstract, I'm sorry. In concrete terms, the curriculum is worked out by negotiation between kids, the cultural heritage (knowledge available in books and people), the concerns and work of the community, and teachers.

The curriculum ends up being a negotiated settlement about learning as the work students have to do; requirements for successful completion of a course. Often these requirements will be for carrying out collaborative projects on specific, agreed topics, or specific community research and develoment activities.

I suppose another way of saying all of that is to say that the curriculum is the means by which a student comes to understand him or herself in a real historical and social context, and understands how his or her practices can play a part in the transformation of that context, whether through material means (technology) or social ones (social action).

You shouldn't think, by the way, that all of this means we will see no more subject teaching in schools, or that all the curricula we now have must be chucked out the window. We still need some didactic teaching and some structured and sequenced learning resources. But they must all be resources which serve their purpose in that general context of learning **for** society, not just **about** it.

I take it, then, that your view of knowledge is that it is a historical matter?

Yes. Knowledge is **not** information to be swallowed whole by students. Nor is it just ideas in the heads of students. It is actively constructed and it is always active in the interplay between reflection and practice. It is alive, not inert. It is something which emerges in the context of doing things and understanding their material, social, historical significance. And it reaches its peak in thinking critically — seeing the significance and being able to act practically and strategically in a real situation.

One other thing: real knowledge is never just about 'truth' — that is, Truth with a capital T. Since the ancient Greeks we have known that real knowledge is linked to the good and the right. Truth can only be evaluated in a social context of free debate and criticism — that is the way scientific knowledge progresses. So truth depends on social conditions which foster critical thinking and which allow everyone to participate in critical evaluation of truth claims. If we mean to have a democratic society, then we will only have truths when we break down barriers which deny people access to knowledge — barriers like authoritarianism and self-interest. We can only have truth when we have social conditions which allow for participation in communication. And all of that means that a concern for truth and for social justice are not separate things but jointly necessary for a rational society.

I know lots of people find these ideas new or difficult to accept — especially the link between truth and justice, but a great deal of modern social philosophy points this way. I mention it because it has such important implications for schools and curriculum. Especially the idea that the work of the school must model not only right knowledge but right action. More than that, it must be socially just if it is to concern itself with truth. And most of us would agree that to be educational, schools have to concern themselves with truth.

What is your view of the student's role in all this?

The student is not an adult; he or she is inexperienced and doesn't know many things that it is important to know. But the student is a product of a social experience and must be treated as someone who has a role to play in decisions about the social processes of learning and school organisation. Early on we made some mistakes by putting students into the situation where they had to make all of those decisions by themselves. They couldn't handle it, and we couldn't live with their choices. Now we see that we have to work these things out together, and that we have to hold them to their commitments. Otherwise the whole school becomes unworkable.

The other thing is that students must learn to use their experience — the experience they bring to the school and the experiences they have in school. They must learn to see that real knowledge is based in their own direct experience and their reflection on the indirect experience of others. They develop their experience by using it in tasks that are real and meaningful for them, and by using the collaborative experience of the group so they can articulate their learnings and relate them to what they learn indirectly. So that means the student has to be a co-learner - a learner **and** someone who collaborates with others in learning.

What about the teacher's role?

The teacher has to be a co-learner too, a collaborator in the learning enterprise. But lest you think that's too woolly and glib, I should say that the teacher has a special responsibility for seeing that learning activities do have potential for creating learning, and for organising and coordinating activities so that kids can learn and see what they've learned as some kind of real development. I always think that the key thing is that the teacher has to keep asking himself or herself and the kids and anyone else whether what's going on is educational. That is the key thing about the school —it has to be educational in the sense that it is constantly developing kids' critical awareness of themselves and their society, helping them to understand and to act with understanding.

What does that imply for the teacher's role in assessment?

Teachers and students have roles in assessment. Students have to be able to assess what they've done. Often they will be able to assess each others' work. And teachers should be able to negotiate assessments — preferably descriptive statements about what's been achieved — with students.

More importantly, assessment shouldn't be competitive. When it is, it turns the whole curriculum into a race for grades or marks, and instantly you lose the quality of education in the sense I've been describing. You put the teacher back in the role of distributor of opportunities and definer of success, and the kids into the role of supplicants for approval. And you treat the students individualistically, with the result that it's harder for them to see what they have achieved together.

Many of us now see that the most effective way to organise assessment is through what Bill Hannan calls 'work-based' or 'goal-based' assessment — negotiating agreements about successful completion of units of work, then holding work done up to scrutiny in the light of those agreements. Using that approach, you get over all of those problems about whether kids are getting work done or just goofing off or whatever. Everyone can agree about whether the units of work have been completed in the terms agreed. And that means you can evaluate the course to see whether it requires things that the students can't achieve.

It all sounds slightly risky in terms of the organisation of the classroom. Is it?

It is when you first try it! It took us a while to work out the organisational aspects. The key thing is a school meeting or a class meeting which can actually run things. These are hopeless in really big schools, so you might need mini-schools or sub-schools of one kind or another to make them effective — so people can all participate and be held to decisions. You have these meetings weekly to decide major issues and the overall work plan. From this meeting you can periodically change working groups, topics, projects and so on. It is also responsible for school rules and other matters.

Then, in your smaller groups — subject groups, electives, working groups or whatever — you can organise specific learning tasks and negotiate the curriculum in detail. Individual contributions, group work and progress on whole tasks can be self-reflectively evaluated in the context of agreed work goals.

It means that whole-school organisation has to be pretty flexible, and faculties have to fit into a whole curriculum context. But it works, and staff can see how their specific areas fit into the whole curriculum context.

We haven't had too much difficulty since we agreed that there would be some major divisions in the curriculum — language development in English, another language, maths, science, social studies (history and social projects) and the like. We organise our own divisions in the compulsory years and then move on to STC organisation (VISE Approved Study Structure V) for Year 12, with an STC-type organisation in Year 11. It was a problem when we had to do everything by electives and negotiation — now we can agree to some general requirements (for example, compulsory second language) at the outset and then work on specific negotiations within the framework. There's a lot more to say about organisation, but you can get a clearer picture from things like the *STC book: the schools tertiary entrance certificate* (VSTA, 1981), the book Garth Boomer edited called *Negotiating the curriculum* (Ashton Scholastic, 1982), and Gil Freeman's book on Sydney Road Community School called *Small school in a state of change* (Deakin University Press, 1982).

One other thing about organisation: we are definitely opposed to ability grouping, streaming, and that sort of thing. As far as possible, we aim for mixed-ability grouping and cross-age tutoring so that students can work together on tasks of real interest to them and recognise that collaboration is an important part of learning. It is not just co-operation, though many of the values of co-operation are relevant. But 'co-operation' often suggests that one person gives something up to help the other with the things the other one wants done. In collaboration, the participants decide things together, for common purposes or at least purposes that overlap. That's the value we try to build into as much of our curriculum organisation and school organisation as we can.

I think I've got an answer to some questions about your view of control and participation by students and staff in decision-making.

Yes. But I should stress that participatory and collaborative decision-making are not just technical issues. They're really important aspects of the curriculum as I see it. Decisions provide the link between student experience and the curriculum as a learning project for the school. They bring out the social character of the learning process. And they demonstrate the place of knowledge in a democratic society — it must be self-reflectively used, and the social consequences of knowledge and action must be understood. In other words, decision-making is an essential part of the curriculum, not something 'hidden' or something separate.

I have some questions on subject departments and resources here, but I think you've gone some way to answering those too.

Yes. It would help some of your readers if you could mention those books I just talked about.

Well — next question. What is the role of the community?

The community is essential. We tried, as far as we were able, to build the community into the work of the school. We tried to implement the kinds of ideas that the Schools Commission mentioned in its report on 15 and 16 year olds. They call it 'the adaptive school'. But we had to go further. The school couldn't just adapt to the community in an accidental way, or on the basis of more or less accidental community representation on school committees. We needed to know much more about the community, and help develop an adaptive community that we could be part of.

Nowadays we have a number of neighbourhood projects going on important community matters. We talk about our neighbourhood, because that is a concrete community we work with. We have become involved in employment, recreation, health and welfare, environmental issues and other local projects. Also multicultural programs and counter-sexist projects. If I had my way, half of every school day would be devoted to real research and development programs carried out by the school in response to community issues. We might initiate some projects, but we would also invite the local council and other community organisations to set us research tasks, and, if they looked educationally-valid (remember — we are an educational institution, not a social action agency), we would see if we had a group free to pick up the job. Then we would be a research and learning resource for the community, and that would also help to bring the community into the school. And the learning would have a real purpose for the students — they could see themselves contributing in a concrete way to local decision-making. We are already doing some of that, but nowhere near as much as I would like.

Finally, would you like to say anything about society as a whole?

That's a pretty big question. I'll just say this. We live in a society that has a lot of very real problems.

Social problems, economic problems, technical problems. A society that neglects these problems, or leaves them to be the responsibility of a few, is neither democratic nor just. When these things are left to be worked out by the few, most of the problems will remain. Because part of the problem is that only a few are powerful, and their interests tend to get served when they are in the key positions. The school needs to demonstrate how a rational and just society works, and it needs to develop a critical awareness about irrational and unjust processes in society as a whole. Those aren't just social values — they are educational ones, concerned with helping students to see and understand the world and their place in it. And their capacity to influence the way things are. Education should be empowering — it should not only enlighten kids, but also show them how they can act to build a better world. We need a lot more of that in the world today.

My analysis of society is that we are a pretty alienated bunch, isolated and made powerless by social structures that reward individualism and self-interest. We are isolated in production processes — fragmented from one another's concerns and interests. We become alienated by social processes and we imagine that individual consumption, in the sense of the consumer society, is some recompense for what we have lost.

We can't change the values of the consumer society easily or quickly, but we do need to keep resisting them. Maybe we will be able to improve things by studying the social problems we have today and by concerted action change the conditions which cause the problems. Schools have an important part to play in developing the critical sense that allows students to recognise the achievements and the problems of our society and a sense that they can contribute something to its betterment. By recognising that they are part of society, schools can organise themselves to show students what people can achieve when they work together to improve things.

Thank you.

Thank you for the opportunity to put my views.

Profiles of transition initiatives

1. A work experience program with a socially-critical orientation

Work experience is seen as a learning method, applicable for students across a range of age levels. Experience may be within or outside the school, in industrial/commercial work-places or within other community agencies. Students use work experience essentially as researchers for fact-finding, development of views on specific areas of social concern, and to experience the nature of different environments.

knowledge seen as issues-related, critically related to known information, social concerns

the boundary between school and community learning spaces is weak; learning occurs in a range of environments

Work experience is organised within the general school program by a team of teachers and students. A broad block timetable allows for flexible timing of experience. Decisions regarding negotiating the work experience are taken by the group. Specific organisation of particular projects is undertaken by the student within the framework of group decisions.

negotiated and collaborative decision-making

curriculum organisation negotiated between participating groups; roles for all participants are collaboratively agreed; capacity, not authority, is the criterion for allocation of tasks

Experience focuses on areas under study, relating to issues of social/economic concern, such as the nature of various employee circumstances, effect of technology on society and the work-place. Objectives for the experience involve both development of rigorous analytical capacities and understanding of areas of knowledge. Further objectives relate to development of inter-personal capacities and personal competence as a part of total curriculum goals.

society seen as fluid, historically-changing; its contradictions provide foci for learning, critical analysis and change

Students are involved in actively developing knowledge and understanding; they are required to gradually develop capacities to link these experiences with knowledge from other sources. They are involved in decision-making as partners with teachers. The process requires the development of high levels of self-discipline.

student learning roles include constructing new knowledge, understanding existing knowledge; learning viewed as involving work skills and personal attributes as well as mastery of information

Work experience forms part of overall assessment based on an observable development of each individual student together with joint analysis by teachers and students of the quality and quantity of specific performance in relation to group decisions. Assessment is by comparing descriptions of the work done with agreed criteria for the task. Students are not competitively graded.

assessment is work-based, related to criteria for successful completion; descriptive assessments summarise work-based assessments made during the course

Parents and other community members participate in work experience as part of the regular debate concerning curriculum goals and approaches, become joint decision-makers along with students and teachers, and may utilise their time and skills where available to assist individual students in organising the experience or reflecting on the knowledge developed.

community as partner in curriculum and learning work; activities related to community concerns — ie, community participation, not just involvement

2. A youth participation program with a socially-critical orientation

collaborative decision-making by teachers and students →

Programs are developed by teams of teachers, together with students, as part of a cross-subject curriculum at either a year level or in vertical age groups. Programs are seen as linking active learning methods with passive learning oriented specifically towards knowledge and conceptual skill development. Interpersonal skills and collaborative learning are kept in view as specific objectives for program implementation.

← *project-based, not subject-based curriculum*

← *cross-age grouping*

← *personal and practical skills are related to conceptual knowledge*

group decisions coordinate activities; shared control →

All organisational activities and decisions emanate from teacher-student groups. Specific tasks may be allocated to students or teachers from within the group. Teachers help students who experience difficulties in involvement in decision-making or in completing specific organisational tasks. In most cases, the tasks are completed by students. The program is central to the total curriculum, which is organised through a broad block timetable. Out of class activities and specific classroom lessons are arranged within the timetable by the staff-student group through a weekly organisational meeting.

← *projects are integrated into timetable, not separate*

← *the learning process itself is part of the focus for collaborative learning*

Programs are directed towards developing areas of knowledge and cultural concepts, in addition to specific personal attributes such as student decision-making, exercise of iniative, development of positive self-concept and critical skills for analysing aspects of contemporary society.

emphasis on critical analysis of society →

← *reflection on organisation and decision-making as well as project issues individual and group learnings about them*

Students are partners in the learning process with teachers. They are involved and responsible for aspects of curriculum organisation, learning modes and decisions associated with appropriate assessment.

Students are descriptively assessed, with descriptions being related to the criteria outlined in the negotiation of the course unit in hand. It is oriented towards diagnosing areas of effective improvement and those requesting attention. No competitive grading or assessment of work by reference to any arbitrary standard occurs.

no competitive assessment; work-based assessment related to reflection on tasks in hand →

Parents participate actively in setting curriculum priorities through formal decision-making channels involving both teachers and students. Parents with time and skills may be actively involved in curriculum program as teacher aides or as mentors for individual students. The boundaries between the school and its community are blurred by this process.

weak school-community boundaries →

← *parents and community participate in the organisation and decision-making of the program*

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